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ABSTRACT

Summarizing the full report of a study by the same title that originally appeared in five volumes, this document is divided into four sections. Section I critiques and clarifies the values, goals, and assumptions of Organization Development (OD), a change strategy for organizational self-development and renewal adapted from business settings and used in schools over the past 15 years. In section II, the authors identify and analyze the various models of OD in practice, including conditions and strategies affecting its initiation, implementation, and continuation. Organized like section II around two main categories--empirical case studies in school districts and overviews and comparative reviews of the field of OD--section III assesses the impact or outcomes of OD on achievement, productivity, and attitudes. The document's final section examines OD's future and suggests policy implications for educational agencies at local school district, intermediate unit, university, state/provincial department of education, and federal education agency levels. Extensive references are included. (JBM)

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ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT IN SCHOOLS: THE STATE OF THE ART

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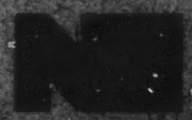

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Organization Development in Schools: The State of the Art

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The full report of the study summarized here originally appeared under the title ***OD in Schools: The State of the Art.*** That report is available in five volumes, as follows:

Volume I: Introduction and Executive Summary	ERIC ED 166837
Volume II: Review of Research on OD	ERIC ED 168217
Volume III: OD Consultants/OD Programs in School Districts	ERIC ED 168218
Volume IV: Case Studies	ERIC ED 168219
Volume V: Implication for Policy, Research, and Practice	ERIC ED 169626

FOREWORD

In a world sometimes pessimistic about the chances of serious improvement in education, the advocates of organization development (OD) remain hopeful that ideas drawn from the behavioral sciences can help any work group achieve its goal. The National Institute of Education (NIE) has sponsored numerous applications of such approaches to planned change over the past few years. These have included a major research and development center at the University of Oregon, as well as OD efforts in high schools in New York City and elsewhere. Among the results of such NIE support are case studies, articles, handbooks, and a national network of active consultants. Occasional links have also been forged with the widespread practice of similar ideas in business, industry, government, and other social services.

Educators have expressed continuing interest in the merits of the OD approach; at the same time, scholars, researchers, and practitioners have noted their continuing uncertainty about how best to study and develop OD strategies. In response, the Institute asked Matthew Miles and Michael Fullan to consider the state of the OD field, to report on its present condition, and to suggest new directions people in the field might take to improve educational organizations. With their colleague Gib Taylor, the team surveyed consultants and school districts involved in OD projects to find effective practices. The team also conducted on-site case studies of three school systems using OD approaches and reviewed the many OD-related writings now available. Their five-volume report shows extensive activity in a wide range of educational settings, with many satisfied advocates. Problems of definition, of practice, and of measurement and research are numerous but not insurmountable, say the authors in a concluding volume of recommendations for diverse audiences.

This volume is a reprint of the study summary prepared for the American Educational Research Association journal, *Review of Educational Research*, and is but one means of further developing the implications of the study and making them available to a wide readership. The Institute sponsored a meeting of a dozen people active in OD in education with two of the study authors. A report of suggested directions for new research and development on the subject grew from those discussions and from prepared papers. That report, authored by Richard Schmuck, is now available.

This reprint is the second in a series of research reviews and syntheses sponsored by the Institute's School Management and Organization Studies unit. An earlier publication by Richard Elmore, *Complexity and Control*, is based on studies of program implementation. A planned publication will deal with women and minorities in the principalship. Through these reviews, we hope to bring areas of research and practice into focus for diverse audiences of scholars, researchers, and practitioners. We welcome readers' comments and reactions.

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Organization Development in Schools: The State of the Art

Organization Development (OD) is a change strategy for organizational self development and renewal. Adapted from business settings, it has been used in schools over the past 15 years. There are widely different images of what OD is, and widely different claims made for its value or worthlessness. The field of OD in education is badly in need of stock taking. In this review we assess the state of the art of OD in four respects: (1) critiquing and clarifying the values, goals, and assumptions of OD in general and as applied to education; (2) identifying and analyzing the various models and operating characteristics of OD in practice (conditions and strategies affecting its initiation, implementation, and continuation); (3) assessing the impact or outcomes of OD on achievement, productivity, and attitudes; and (4) reconsidering OD's future, and suggesting policy implications for educational agencies at different levels.

Organization Development (OD) is a change strategy for organizational self-development and renewal, which as been used more and more widely in many types of settings over the past twenty years, starting in business organizations and moving to public agencies and schools. Although OD has been applied to schools since the mid 60's, to our knowledge there are no comprehensive theoretical and empirical reviews of its use in education available.[1]

Our review of the field was prompted by the broad concern to determine what OD is, not only its conceptual base, values, and goals, but also its characteristics in use,

The preparation of this review was in part supported by National Institute of Education. Contracts 400-77-0051 and 0052. No endorsement by NIE is implied. We would like to thank Joan May for her administrative help in completing this review.

[1] The most thoroughgoing is Schmuck and Runkel's work, which they formulate using systems theory and which they docume ' in considerable detail (Schmuck, Runkel, Arends, & Arends, 1977). Howe er, their review consists of a summary of their own work, not of OD in education as a whole.

and its impact.[1] In order to understand the current state of OD in education, we found it necessary to analyze the general literature on OD as well as particular applications in education. The general literature on OD is quite large, but fortunately has been the subject of several critical theoretical and empirical reviews. These are analyzed in a "review of reviews" mode. For the educational literature we have included all major recent empirical studies we could locate, both published and unpublished, as well as critiques and commentaries on OD and its application in schools.

We discovered a burgeoning research literature with many more examples of the use of OD in education than we had anticipated, although obvious coherence was not its strong suit. The bibliography contains over 100 sources approximately equally divided in three categories: critiques or commentaries on OD; overview, empirical and/or conceptual reviews of the field; and empirical studies on educational OD. We have also included for reference a small number of textbooks (e.g., French & Bell, 1973; Huse, 1975; Nadler, 1977; Schmuck et al., 1977).

Among the critiques and commentaries, typical sources are Blumberg (1976); Crockett (1978); Derr (1976a, 1976b); Miles (1976); Petrella (1977); and Weisbord (1977, 1978a, 1978b). Some of the major sources of overviews, conceptual syntheses, and empirical reviews of OD are Alderfer (1977); Burke (1978); Franklin (1976); Friedlander and Brown (1974); Kahn (1974); Margulies, Wright, and Scholl (1977); Morrison (1978); Nicholas (1979); Pasmore and King (1978); Pate, Nielson, and Bacon, (1977); Porras and Berg (1978); Porras and Patterson (1979). The empirical studies include analyses or reviews of recent educational OD programs in education written by the principal investigators of projects: the most well known, comprehensive, and well documented one being the work of Schmuck, Runkel and colleagues at Oregon (see Runkel & Schmuck, 1974, 1976). We also review all other recent empirical studies of school districts which we could locate, in particular: Cohen and Gadon (1978); Cooke and Coughlan (1979); Keys (1979); Keys and Bartunek (1979); Keys and Kreisman (1978); Mohrman, Mohrman, Cooke and Duncan (1977); and Miles, Fullan, and Taylor (1978a,b); Scheinfeld (1979); Bassin and Gross (Note 1); Coad, Miskel, and van Meter (Note 2). Included in these studies are new applications of OD (e.g., new approaches and/or settings).

Our aim in analyzing the above literature was to provide a systematic and coherent summary of what is known about OD and its use in education. To this end, the review centers on four main categories: (1) Values, Themes and Goals of OD (including assumptions, values, definitions, and different approaches and goals of OD). (2) Operating Characteristics (including entry conditions and other factors that facilitate and inhibit OD in operation, such as the role of internal and external consultants, time line, resources, and so forth; in short, those characteristics that distinguish successful and unsuccessful uses of OD). (3) Outcomes of OD (conse-

[1] This review of the literature is part of a larger assessment of the state of the art of OD in education, which we conducted for NIE. See Fullan, Miles, and Taylor (1978a,b,c); Miles, Fullan, and Taylor (1978a,b). This paper is an expanded version of Volume II including additional sources, as well as a summary of our own empirical studies of over 300 OD consultants and 76 school districts, and case studies as reported in Volumes III and IV. See also Fullan and Miles (1978); Miles and Fullan (1980a); and Miles and Fullan (1980b), for expanded summaries.

quences and impact on organizational climate and functioning, on teacher satisfaction, and on students). (4) The Future of OD (conclusions, unresolved questions, policy implications for OD in education).

I. Values, Themes, and Goals of OD

There are a number of ambiguities and dilemmas involved in obtaining a clear picture of what OD is. Perhaps the best starting point is to identify the various definitions of OD contained in the sources we reviewed. We will then turn to several more problematic issues under headings that include criticisms of OD, OD's appropriateness for schools, and value and assumption dilemmas. The concluding section offers a summary of the main problems of defining OD, and proposes a more comprehensive working definition.

OD defined

The range of meaning of OD is contained in the following representative definitions:

In an earlier review, Miles and Schmuck (1971) described OD as "a planned and sustained effort to apply behavioral science for system improvement using reflexive, self-analytic methods" (p. 2).

In one of the most recent reviews 6 years later, Alderfer (1977) refers to the practice of OD as "aimed toward improving the quality of life for members of human systems and increasing the institutional effectiveness of those systems" (p. 272).

French and Bell (1973) include the following elements in their definition:

> Organization development is a long-range effort to improve an organization's problem-solving and renewal processes, particularly through a more effective and collaborative management of organization culture—with special emphasis on the culture of formal work teams—with the assistance of a change agent or catalyst, and the use of the theory and technology of applied behavior science, including action research. (p. 50)

Dyer (1974) states:

> OD is a theory, a method and a value system (often hidden) for improving the human side of organizational life and thereby improving the task-goal accomplishments of their complex organizations. (p. 11)

Kimberly and Nielsen (1975) begin their article with the following description:

> Organization development (OD), a philosophy of a technology for producing organizational change, has been implemented in a variety of organizations. Growing out of the human relations traditions in the forties and fifties, it is actually a pastiche of techniques developed in the behavioral sciences which focus on problems of organizational learning, motivation, problem solving, communications, and interpersonal relations. (p. 191)

In specifying some of the goals of OD intervention, Schmuck, Murray, Smith, Schwartz, and Runkel (1975) list six explicit objectives:

(1) develop clear communication through new communications skills and new procedures for clearer, more open communication.
(2) build trust and increase understanding by opening close, personal communications so that hidden agendas and covert feelings can be dealt with in a climate of openness and authenticity
(3) involve more people in decision-making by encouraging information sharing and the identification of related responsibilities.
(4) create an open problem-solving climate by helping companion groups identify more clearly the problems confronting them and to develop collaborative, workable plans for solving them.
(5) increase group effectiveness by helping members analyze and improve the procedures for carrying out group tasks.
(6) uncover conflict by providing participants with procedures that allow conflict to emerge. (p. 11)

Friedlander and Brown (1974), use two basic themes or approaches to characterize OD: people oriented (human processual) approaches, which attempt to change organizational processes in order to increase human fulfillment (primarily) and task accomplishment (secondarily, if at all), and technology oriented (techno-structural) approaches aimed at changing organizational structures in order to increase task accomplishment (primarily) and human filfillment (secondarily, if at all).

Bassin and Gross (Note 1) have developed a high school renewal program working in high schools in New York City and define the program as OD based, with this main goal:

To have the school institutionalize a systematic, participative process of problem solving and improvement as a regular, ongoing function within the school). (p. 5)

They also list a number of assumptions based on traditional OD practice (e.g., participation, systematic process, etc.) and list three assumptions, which they claim deviate from traditional OD: practicality (short-term tangible results), presence of outside catalyst, and political skills. Of these three, only the latter one is not at all referred to in other definitions, although practicality is not explicitly stated.

Weisbord (1977) struggles with the problem by asking, "How do you know it works, if you don't know what it is?" He responds by suggesting that OD consists of three main components:

There is only one right goal for OD: To confront ... the tension between *freedom* and *constraint*. Secondly, OD's unique selling proposition is the task/process relationship... Above all, we should assert, and be prepared to prove this relationship—the obvious (and not so obvious) ways "process issues" block task accomplishment. Thirdly, OD's contract is to help people achieve valid data, make free choices, and develop internal commitment to act. (pp. 4–6)

He concludes:

no matter what the intervention is named, unless it addresses *all three issues*—not any one or any two, *but all three*:

freedom/constraint

. task/process
. data/choice/commitment
it is not, cannot be, and should not be called "OD." To work on only one or two of the three equations is to work too hard for too little return—to be overly ambitious about what's possible, overly impressed with techniques and methods, and unappreciative of OD's limitations as well as its potential. (p. 7)

Crockett (1978) and Petrella (1977) provide further support for the need to examine the question of *balance* between individual quality of life in the work place and organizational productivity. Both claim that concern with the individual has been relatively neglected.

Petrella writes:

Most organizations are "about" output and productivity. How satisfied people are in their work is really a secondary value... If you want to be shown the exit, start talking about humanizing work or the quality of working life without showing that you are deeply concerned about productivity. (p. 2)

But he goes on to say:

Yet I see OD as trying to do something that will find a new balance in the work setting. (p. 2)

And later:

In my view, the core of our mission in OD is to help people look IN HERE—into their own convictions—for another species of truth... I simply mean helping a person examine his, her own thoughts and feelings, helping a pair of people understand and work on their own relationship, helping a group or organization understand its real operating norms... By helping individuals and organizations discover their IN HERE truth, we can help them discover that they have some power, at their disposal to create a new and better future. (p. 3)

Crockett (1978) states the same theme:

The place for OD to make permanent changes upon the system is to deal with the way people *behave* in it... The issue is the nature of human beings, and herein lies the long-term challenge of OD.

Our organizations are not only in a place of constant change, but all too often they are bad places for human beings. Our organizational challenge is not just to help them become bigger, richer and more productive, but to help them become better places for people. (p. 12)

To summarize the preceding in an aggregate manner, the key words which define OD include: *planned change*; *long range*; organizational improvement in *problem solving*, *communication*, *collaboration*, *participation*, *trust*, and *uncovering and confronting conflict*; a focus on *human processes* and *technostructural factors* in order to improve both *task accomplishment* and the *quality of life of individuals*; assistance of

a *change agent* or *catalyst*; use of *behavioral science* techniques to *gather valid data* in a *reflexive*, self-analytic fashion.[3]

Furthermore, OD involves *all* of these elements being used in a relational or balanced way (see Weisbord, 1977). If this is not the case, a development program, regardless of its label, is not OD unless it *simultaneously* is planned; long-range; involves a change agent or agents; focuses on organizational processes, tasks, and structures; addresses the development of individuals[4] as well as the organization; and uses behavior science techniques to generate valid data for informing both individual and organizational decisions.

If we apply the aggregate definition to the individual definitions, we immediately recognize that certain key elements are not explicitly addressed. For example, several definitions do not make reference to individual development or to the quality of life for individuals (French & Bell, 1973; Kimberly & Nielsen, 1975; Schmuck & Miles, 1971; Schmuck et al., 1975; Coad et al., Note 2). Some do not refer to task accomplishment (Kimberly & Nielsen, 1975; Schmuck et al.). Several authors describe OD's goals, but say nothing of its methods (Alderfer, 1977, 1974; Crockett, 1978; Derr, 1973; Kimberly & Nielsen, 1975; Weisbord). Only two authors (French & Bell, 1973; Schmuck & Miles, 1971) explicitly state that it is a "long range effort" or "sustained" attempt. Such inexplicitness makes it more likely that key elements are neglected or not addressed in a balanced manner with the other elements.

Criticisms of OD

Critiques of OD range from exasperation at the number of definitions of OD to questions about its underlying values.

Friedlander and Brown (1974) in their review summarize some of the main criticisms. Note that they refer to both espoused values *and* values in practice (see also Fullan, 1976).

> The future of OD rests in part on its values and the degree to which its practice, theory, and research are congruent with those values. Thus far, most OD is initiated by the organization—for the purpose of furthering such organizational goals as increased performance.... Though most OD practitioners and researchers in some

[3] This latter property is explicitly alluded to by Petrella (1977), Schmuck and Miles (1971), Schmuck et al. (1975), and Weisbord (1977). It remains tacitly clear in most of the other definitions that OD is not a technocratic, expert-advice-giving model of planned change, but one in which organization members *themselves* participate directly in organizational study, diagnosis, and change. This perhaps more than any other feature of the various definitions, distinguishes OD from other efforts to improve organizational life, such as management consulting, training, hiring/firing, reorganizations, and so forth.

[4] Most of these concepts are self-explanatory, but the reference to the development of individuals warrants special emphasis. If by the "human side of things" we mean group processes (communication, group trust, etc.), we are not necessarily addressing directly the development of individuals in the organization. In our view, the limitations of the earlier individualistic approaches (e.g., T-groups) have led some proponents of OD and systems oriented approaches to overreact and neglect the importance of individual development in the context of the organization. This is, in part, what Weisbord refers to when he claims that OD must balance freedom and constraint.

degree value both organizational task accomplishment *and* human fulfillment, there is an organizational press in favor of the former. OD as a field runs the risk of encouraging and implementing subtle but persuasive forms of exploitation, curtailment of freedom, control of personality, violation of dignity, intrusion of privacy—all in the name of science and of economic and technological efficiency. Within the hierarchial fabric of everyday organizational power struggles, OD researcher/consultants typically represent the control needs of management. The needs of those lower in the organization for a higher quality of life, for an expanded range of occupational life choices may seldom be known or acted upon by the consultant. (p. 335)

Forbes (1977) lists the key words from definitions of OD (planned change, behavioral science, problem solving, etc.) and contrasts these with the reality of OD as he has experienced it:

I have found that many OD consultants, employed by members of management for use in their organizations, seem actually to function as *re-stabilizing agents* rather than change agents. Their real purpose within the organization is not to foster growth and improvement but rather to restore a lost homeostatic balance.

He goes on to produce a contradictory set of key words:

protector of the status quo; reactive change; political and common sense knowledge, hurt reduction, organizational survival, controlled from the middle.... (p. 12)

Crockett (1978) makes essentially the same observation that OD's covert objective often seems to be "to manipulate people into a 'happier state', or to gain greater productivity from them" (p. 12).

Lundberg (Note 3) states the problem in more Marxian terms:

Most of OD's assumptions (rules of thumb?) would have us uncritically accept a capitalistic economic and political structure, uncritically adjust to economic and technological growth, and uncritically accept the importance of social class and the centrality of work in people's lives. Most OD "assumptions" blind theorizers to the differences and pluralism of organizations and the real, structural sources of conflict. (p. 9)

Bowers (1977) describes more mundane but nonetheless real dilemmas in Organization Development—superficiality, commercialism, and mistaken assumptions about the consultant's role. In particular, superficiality refers to short term, one-shot workshops, if they are not linked to ongoing activities of the organization, or if they only involve a few members of the organization. Superficiality also occurs when OD activities are preprogrammed and are experienced as artificial in relation to the real needs of the organization. In short, superficiality means that too few of the organization's resources are brought to bear on the real problems (Bowers, p. 54). Commercialism includes such things as overadvocacy (making exaggerated claims about appropriateness and payoff) and consequent aversion to rigorous evaluation (Bowers, p. 54). The mistaken assumption often made about the consultants' role defines it as a catalytic one of freeing up the "natural" capacity of the group rather than a linkage

one that matches the needs of the group to a variety of outside resources (Bowers, 1977).

Jones and Pfeiffer (1978) list several similar problems about the use and misuse of OD which have contributed to its negative image—the inappropriate use of T-groups with intact work groups, the confusion of "team building" with OD (the latter focusing on the organization as a whole), overemphasis on emotional issues over organizational problems, and the use of inappropriate methods and jargon, which confuse participants.

Many of the problems of inappropriate uses or misuses of OD relate to the lack of a clear conceptual base (Kahn, 1974):

> Organizational development is not a concept, at least not in the scientific sense of the word: it is not precisely defined; it is not reducible to specific uniform, observable behaviors; it does not have a prescribed and verifiable place in a network of logically related concepts, a theory. (p. 490)

Kahn cites several definitions and contends that they are "too inclusive to be helpful" (p. 490), and that when OD treatments are used we get only a sense of global packages rather than precise independent variables in relation to potential effects. In examining Franklin's (1973) bibliography of OD, which contained 200 items, Kahn concludes: "I have found no examples of sustained refinement of independent variables in the articles ... although some beginnings have been made from time to time." (p. 492).

Lundberg (Note 3) agrees that one of the main sources of the problems of defining and working with OD relates to its poorly developed state of *OD theory*:

> The term "theory" is variously used. "Theories" in OD are multiple and there is no general overarching one. The "theories" probably leave many gaps in our knowledge. These "theories" only begin to measure up to the canons of so-called rigorous science. These "theories" are more focused on the "whats" rather than the "hows" of change. (p. 3)

To a large extent, these problems probably reflect the poor state of "organizational theory" in general, but they seem particularly problematic for OD because of its ambiguous definitional nature, and because it is applied to a variety of types of organizations (e.g., business and service). This raises the troublesome question of whether OD is applicable (and if so under what conditions) to schools—an issue to which we now turn.[5]

OD's appropriateness for schools

Schools, of course, are organizations—subsystems of larger organizations called school districts. They presumably are subject to the ills for which OD is a potential cure, have money to pay for professional intervention efforts if they deem the effort

[5] The problems of OD are not unique to North America: see Mulford (Note 4), who analyzes the increasing use of OD in Australian schools as reflecting eight major dilemmas, all of which are familiar in our review (e.g., obscure definition of OD, overdependence, overenthusiasm, etc.).

to be potentially beneficial, and may be able to accomplish their missions with more effectiveness, as a result. It is possible, however, that proportionately fewer schools than other nonprofit agencies, and than profit-making organizations, are using OD.

OD in schools, like OD itself, is only about two decades old. The first activity that might reasonably be labelled OD (as contrasted with human relations training of individuals) is probably the work at China Lake Naval Ordnance Test Station by Buchanan and others in 1954 (see Miles & Schmuck, 1971). The Esso developments in the late 50's were the first in-company work with any momentum. As in industrial settings, T-group work within schools began as early as the mid-50's, but the first OD project as such in schools was that mounted in 1965 (Miles & Schmuck, 1971, Project on Organization Development in Schools, Columbia University). Subsequent projects and centers that had a strong effect on the development of educational OD were the USOE-financed COPED project (1964), the sustained program at the Center for Advanced Study in Educational Administration at the University of Oregon (1968 onward), the briefer efforts of the Educational Change Team (University of Michigan 1967–70), and the Program in Humanistic Education (SUNY Albany, 1969–73). For more historical detail, the reader is referred to Miles and Schmuck (1971).

The National Training Laboratories (NTL Institute) began the first systematic training program for OD practitioners in 1965; the national OD network has grown from about 375 members in 1970 to 1,131 presently. OD in education, as might be expected from the chronology above, has developed more slowly. By 1978 Schmuck and Miles located 187 practitioners who said they had carried out OD work with schools lasting a year or more, but they could not find more than "a handful" of school districts where an actual institutionalized OD capability existed; Miles, Fullan, and Taylor (1978) located 308 consultants and 76 school districts using OD. Blumberg (1976) pointed out that only one-half of 1 percent of the members of the OD Network in 1974 listed public school districts as their affiliation.

Blumberg went on to predict that diffusion of OD to any substantial extent among schools was unlikely, because of such features as the interpersonal orientation of school administrators, the individually oriented style of staff development programs, the lack of "hard data" on educational OD outcomes, and current economic constraints.

Derr (1976a), after several years of practicing OD in education and observing its use, also concluded that OD may not be appropriate for schools. Derr argued that certain properties of schools as organizations made them incompatible with several OD concepts. Specifically, he identified five sets of incompatibilities:

School Organization	OD Concept Violated
A. *Lack of Common Indicators of Performance*	A. *Readiness* must feel a need for improvement client system must sense its own problems in order to be committed to working them.
B. *Nature of School Environment* survival guaranteed public relations orientation crisis orientation	B. *Improvement Orientation* it is worth time, effort, $ to improve must continuously learn from experience (self-renewal) long-term effort

C. *Autonomy Needs of Employees*	C. *Collaborative Theory and Method*
D. *Low Required Interdependence*	D. *Systemic Orientation*
don't have to work together	also, collaborative values and methods in OD
benefits of collaboration not greater than costs	real incentives to stress opportunity costs of non-collaboration
E. *Civil Service Mentality*	E. *External and Internal Capability, Improvement Orientation*
some goal displacement: employment v. educational systems	must employ best internal OD specialists from whatever background
job security conscious	both external and internal OD specialists
inbreeding	roles and structure fluid and dynamic; choose best men of group for a given job
	norms of risk taking and improvement should prevail
F. *Few Resources*	F. *Adequate Resources Necessary*

(from Derr, 1976a p. 236)

Simply stated, according to Derr, the nature of school organizations is incompatible with the assumptions of OD. But Miles (1976) challenged Derr's view, pointing out that (a) OD is not properly defined as "collaborative" necessarily, but simply the "sustained, reflexive use of behavioral-science-based efforts to improve a system's functioning," whether that functioning is "competitive, negotiative, low-interdependent or closely collaborative"; (b) personality variables such as "civil service mentality" are less relevant to OD diffusion than system-structural variables; (c) OD is as often pursued for reasons such as perceived pain, injustice, or system stress as for goal achievement failures as such; (d) "anatomy is not destiny" (in the sense that certain properties of schools doom OD to failure).

Weisbord (1978b) provides a more elaborate explanation of dilemmas in applying OD to different types of organizations. He claims that OD works better in "output-focused" systems like business organizations, which are characterized by concrete goals and task interdependence, and are amenable to clear performance measures compared to "input-focused" systems like schools, which have the opposite characteristics (cohesiveness, clarity of goals and performance, and collaboration are more remote). In some ways Weisbord's analysis agrees with Derrs' that OD is much more unlikely to work in schools, but in other ways it supports Miles: one must base OD efforts in schools with these particular properties in mind (indeed, must build them in as part of the strategy of analyzing readiness conditions for OD and in focusing on specific problem areas). (See also Goodstein, 1978 for a discussion of the use of OD in public bureaucracies.)

In any case, schools do have special properties that make them interesting and condition efforts at facilitative intervention. First, there is *goal diffuseness*: the organization's mission is usually abstractly stated, with output measurement a difficult matter (Miles & Schmuck, 1971), partly because of the long time-line involved. Second, *technical capability* is often suboptimal; the knowledge base underlying educational practice is relatively weak, and/or not well diffused to practitioners (Sieber, 1968; Lortie, 1975). Third, there are typically *coordination* problems; schools and school districts tend to be low-interdependent, "loosely-coupled" systems (Bidwell, 1965; Weick, 1976) where goals do not connect well with means, and where

accountability is low and autonomy high." Fourth, schools have *boundary management* problems; the skin of the organization seems unbearably thin, over-permeable to dissatisfied stakeholders. Fifth, an associated reality is that schools (at least, public schools) are "domesticated," owned by their environments, and are *non-competitive* for resources (Carlson, 1965). Survival is guaranteed, and as Pincus (1974) has suggested, the incentives for innovation are feeble. Sixth, schools form a *constrained, decentralized* system: though in the United States there are 16,000 districts and 89,000 separate buildings, each nominally autonomous, there are many national constraints exerted by standardized testing, a national textbook market, various accreditation and certification requirements, and a variety of legislation (Miles, 1977).

We can expect, then, that schools might seek assistance with problems generated by one or more of these properties—for example, help with goal-setting, coordination on problems of collective concern, or environmental buffering—or, less optimistically for OD's future in schools, avoid seeking help *because* of these very properties (if goals are diffuse and survival is guaranteed, why aim for self-renewal?).

An empirical study by Miles, Fullan, and Taylor (1978a) of 76 OD-using school districts in the U.S. and Canada found that (a) school districts *do* initiate OD because of goal achievement difficulties, coordination issues, and technical insufficiency or backwardness; (b) boundary management issues are less frequent as a start problem, and districts may require minimal environmental turbulence before launching successful OD; (c) the noncompetitive, "guaranteed survival" aspect has less effect than might be expected, since most of the successful districts began with perceived educational and task-oriented organizational issues, along with projected structural changes; (d) decentralization of school districts is probably a feature slowing or minimizing the diffusion of OD to, at present, less than 1 percent of districts. On balance, we conclude that the special properties of schools do not necessarily unfit them for adopting and implementing OD, and OD is not "inherently" a bad fit for schools as organizations. But schools do present special problems, which must guide OD efforts (see section II).

OD's values and assumptions

Before attempting to reconcile the various viewpoints expressed in this section, it is necessary to probe in more detail the question of the underlying values and assumptions of OD including observations about "values in practice." (We draw mainly on Alderfer, 1977; Bowen, 1977; Friedlander, 1976; Tichy, 1978a, 1978b; Tichy & Hornstein, 1974; and Walton & Warwick, 1973; see also Huse 1975 pp. 21-24.)

Friedlander (1976) begins to explain the underlying dilemmas of OD by suggesting that three sometimes *contradictory* value schemes form the essential basis of OD: rationalism, pragmatism, and existentialism. Depending on the blend of these three values, various precursors of OD were spawned: T-groups, laboratory human relations training, survey research, action research and feedback, MBO and other systems

" As Miles (1977) points out, such a feature is not necessarily to be deplored: loosely-coupled systems tend to be more flexible and adaptive, less a prey to environmental threat, and less vulnerable to incompetence than are more tightly-coordinated systems.

perspectives, and so forth. (Friedlander, 1976, pp. 8–16).[7] When the link between laboratory training and transfer to organizational settings was forged, OD came into existence. Friedlander states that current tensions in OD can be traced to the uneasy combination of the three ancestral values:

> Rationalism pushes contemporary OD toward becoming more scientific, more theoretical and conceptual, more logical and mathematical; toward abstract models, toward building theories; toward understanding the determinants of our organizational, social, and personal worlds. Pragmatism pushes OD in the direction of becoming more useful—how does OD increase effectiveness, performance, productivity. . . . Existentialism within OD pushes the organization to become more humanistic, more aware, more emerging, more person growth oriented. (p. 18)

Friedlander claims that OD gets into trouble when it neglects one or more of the three values. If the rationalist part is neglected, OD fails to operate with a coherent, conceptual base; if the pragmatic part is ignored, OD becomes distant and irrelevant; and if existential values are denied, OD becomes depersonalized (p. 20–21). Improper blends of the three values, states Friedlander, account for OD's being "frequently denounced for failures" (p. 21). (Recall also Bassin & Gross, 1978, who argued for the importance of pragmatic results.)

Alderfer (1977) also discusses the relationship between values and OD. The two main values of OD, according to Alderfer concern the desire to "humanize" organizations and to improve the "effectiveness" of organizations. Alderfer indicates that earlier uses of OD assumed that the two sets of values were compatible, but "as the field has grown, increasing numbers of questions have been raised about just how easy it is to pursue both kinds of values with approximately equal vigor" (p. 198). The problem of power lies at the heart of the issue: "OD professionals must struggle with whether their professional competence (power) is being used to advance humane values and with whether they can harness enough power to bring about desirable change in human organizations" (p. 199). The OD consultant must be sensitive to and deal explicitly with these essentially political processes. Failure to take account of the potential value conflicts and political processes can result in OD's being used to dehumanize social processes rather than to humanize them (p. 199).

As evidence for the reality of the problem, Alderfer cites Tichy and Hornstein's (1974) research, which found that the actions of OD consultants as a group were incongruent with their espoused values and intentions. By and large, OD consultants said that their goal was to promote *individual* freedom and power equalization, but reported that they actually worked primarily to improve productivity and problem-solving capacity of the organization (Tichy & Hornstein, 1974).

In an earlier article, Walton and Warwick (1973) discussed in some detail the ethical dilemmas of OD as falling under three, now familiar headings: power, freedom, and professional responsibility.

Under power, the first question they raise concerns justice:

[7] Note that all these precursors have a strong reflexive, self-analytic core: the emphasis is on inquiry, learning from experience, using data for planning change.

Is it fair that those who already possess power and control wealth have much more access in our society to the "social technology" of OD than do others? (p. 684) (See also Fullan, 1976.)

They suggest that even though most OD consultants claim that they are working for the entire organization, the fact that they are usually hired by management is far from inconsequential. They advocate that OD consultants should be explicitly sensitive to those problems and should deal with power openly.

Secondly, Walton and Warwick contend that OD sometimes implicitly violates the values of freedom (again see Fullan, 1976). If freedom involves awareness of options, knowledge of their consequences, and the ability to act upon them (and consequently freedom from coercion, manipulation, and misuse of information) there are certain ethical dilemmas faced by OD consultants (Walton & Warwick, 1973, pp. 688–689). In citing examples, the two authors raise several ethical problems:

(1) *Informed consent:*
many employees have only the vaguest notion of what OD means at the time they agree to or are persuaded to participate. (p. 689)
(2) *Voluntarism:*
when a supervisor introduces the possibility of participating in a "voluntary" program, it is "very difficult for a subordinate to imagine that there would be no penalty for declining to participate" (p. 690).
(3) *Professional irresponsibility:*
when an OD consultant "allows a client to expect more than can be delivered" (p. 694). ". . . . allows or promotes overdependency or its opposite, shows insufficient commitment to the organization, and/or violates confidentiality in subtle or not so subtle ways" (pp. 696–697).

Other examples by Walton and Warwick show how promises of privacy and freedom can be violated through persuasion, pressure, and manipulation. The authors conclude by advocating greater self-analysis, dialogue, and setting of ethical standards by OD consultants and practitioners. (See also Miles, 1979.)

Bowen (1977) also discusses the value dilemmas in OD identified above, and suggests that the use of Argyris' (1970) primary task model (valid information, free choice, and internal commitment) would minimize the main value conflicts. However, the difficulties and elusiveness of coming to a resolution are emphasized by Van de Vliert (1977, pp. 561–562), who argues that dilemmas in Argyris' "freedom of choice" are inadequately addressed, and that Argyris' practice evidences an identification with top management.

Conclusion

Given all the variations and emphases in the goals of OD and its underlying values, one may be forgiven for echoing Fillmore's (1974) plea: "OD: No More Definitions, Please," or for viewing current thinking on OD as Weisbord (1977) characterizes it:

Depending upon whom you talk to and what you read you will learn that OD works, doesn't work, is extremely complex, scientific and mysterious, defies description,

can't be evaluated, should always be evaluated, risks becoming professionalized, risks not becoming professionalized, doesn't really exist, once existed but is becoming extinct, is metamorphosing into something else which also works, doesn't work, is extremely complex, scientific and mysterious, defies description, etc., etc., etc. (p. 2)

On the other hand, a careful reading of the definitions and value dilemmas contained in the preceding pages enables us to pinpoint some of the basic problems and to understand what OD is and why it has come under attack. Three issues stand out: (1) OD is attacked because many uses of OD probably do not meet all the criteria we have summarized (i.e., are not OD at all); (2) even when particular OD programs theoretically meet the criteria, there is often a discrepancy between the espoused values and the values in practice; and (3) OD is intrinsically difficult because it involves balancing elements of the organization, which are inherently in conflict or tension, and are extremely complex to understand and work with. These three issues are discussed in turn.

First, if we return to our aggregate definition, we can immediately rule out all those limited intervention activities, which address only parts of the organization or the problem (e.g., communications workshops), or which are in Bowers' (1977) term superficial (one-shot training of a small portion of the organization). OD in this sense has failed because many activities that go under the label of OD are not really OD at all. Mislabelling has contributed both to confusion about what OD is, and to the view that OD is irrelevant or inconsequential. The presence of OD-labelled activities that do not meet the general definition can also be seen as a kind of vulgarization stemming from users' eagerness to appear up-to-date, innovative, and so forth, along with unwillingness to expend the time and resources needed for serious effort.

Second, the *values in practice or use* in OD programs may not in fact address the human side of development much as they address the organizational side, despite the intentions of OD consultants. The various critiques of the underlying assumptions and values may be accurate concerning the practice and consequences of many OD efforts, even if those consequences are not intended (indeed, even if the espoused goals are opposite to the eventual consequences).

Third, since OD not only has to *address*, but also to *balance* a number of complex factors—individual and organization, content and process, task and structure, and so forth—over a long period of time, it is understandable that OD has had uneven success, especially since most definitions of OD do not stress the problem of balance.

Even if these three concerns are met, we still would not know if OD is successful and under what conditions (that is a task for sections II and III), but at least it helps us to sort out legitimate from illegitimate uses of OD as a precondition for investigating the potential of OD. In conclusion, general definitions of OD mask the complexities, specific components, and dilemmas involved in the use of OD. The implications of our discussion of the goals and values of OD are twofold. First, potential OD programs and consultants should be scrutinized, and should scrutinize themselves, to determine that each of the major components of OD are in fact included in the OD effort. Second, vigilance and verification are necessary to ensure that the value dilemmas in OD are constantly being checked and kept in balance and that each of the values of OD is actually being implemented in practice.

It may help to summarize this section if we offer a working definition of OD as

applied in schools. It extends and specifies the "aggregated" definition of OD-in-general offered above:

Organization development in school districts is a coherent, systematically-planned, sustained effort at system self-study and improvement, focusing explicitly on change in formal and informal procedures, processes, norms or structures, using behavioral science concepts. The goals of OD include improving *both* the quality of life of individuals as well as organizational functioning and performance with a direct or indirect focus on educational issues.

Some emphases should be noted. The requirement of *coherence and systematic planning* may be too normative, but does serve to distinguish OD from haphazard efforts casually labelled "OD," as increasingly seems to be the case. The emphasis on *explicitness* indicates that OD deals directly with organizational phenomena and their alteration, rather than inducing changes indirectly through some other vehicle. The inclusion of both *formal and informal* organizational issues makes for more thoroughness, and excludes simply "official" rearrangements. The emphasis on *quality of life of individuals* and on *organizational performance* highlights the dual goal of OD and potential problems in pursuing these goals in a balanced, value-congruent way. The permissive inclusion of *educational content* acknowledges that such work is a primary task of school districts, and indicates that curriculum-focused work is not necessarily OD in the absence of the preceding qualifiers. The label "sustained" is perhaps best left unspecified, though an 18-month figure or more is probably useful as a guide, given the year-by-year planning often characteristic of school districts, and other evidence cited later.

All of this is not to claim that there is only one distinct form of OD in schools. The underlying principles may be met in different ways, or the same program may suffer different fates, depending on characteristics of the settings in which it is used. In order to identify more specifically the different operating characteristics of OD programs, and the varying conditions under which they work, we reviewed the literature bearing on these characteristics.

The next two sections are closely related; we examine the nature and conditions of successful and unsuccessful OD in operation (section II) and then focus on the question of success by considering the evidence on the actual impact of OD programs (section III). Section II identifies issues pertaining to using OD and some of the different OD approaches in operation, while section III analyzes the impact of OD as a whole.

II. Operating Characteristics

The consideration of operating characteristics consists of several types of issues: the nature of different OD approaches; conditions for entry and initiation of OD programs; and various operating issues including the role of consultants, time investment and time line, and types of people involved, support required, costs, and others.

The review of research in both sections II and III is organized around two main categories: Empirical Case Studies in School Districts, and Overviews and Comparative Reviews of the Field of OD.

A. Empirical Studies in School Districts

In identifying empirical studies in school districts we were particularly interested in *recent* studies that had made definite efforts to implement OD, were reasonably well documented, and worked with multiple schools in a given district (i.e., engaged the *district* organization in the effort). The following ten studies provide substantial data on the use of OD in schools: Runkel and Schmuck (1974, 1976); Bassin and Gross (Note 1); Milstein (Note 5, Note 6); Cohen and Gadon (1978); Scheinfeld (1979); Keys (1979), Keys and Bartunek (1979), Keys and Kreisman (1978); Cooke and Coughlan (1979); Mohrman et al. (1977); Coad et al. (Note 2); Miles et al. (1978a), and Fullan et al. (1978c).*

Without doubt, the most intensive and substantiated work on OD in schools has been carried out by Schmuck, Runkel and colleagues at the University of Oregon, who have been working with school districts since 1967 (see Schmuck & Runkel, 1972; Schmuck et al., 1975; Schmuck et al., 1977; Runkel & Schmuck, 1974, 1976). Fortunately, they have carried out their own review of research findings based on their work in a number of elementary and junior high schools (Runkel & Schmuck, 1976). An analysis of the research findings on their various OD programs enables us to identify an initial list of the conditions that they have found to be important for the operation of OD. They classify these in four categories: start-up, transition, maintenance, and effects. All but the last will be summarized here (effects will be examined in section III). These four categories will also be used as the framework for reviewing the other studies.

Entry, start-up. This is one of the main themes in the OD literature, as we will see in nearly all the studies. It includes both the system conditions or state of readiness for OD, as well as the way in which OD is introduced. In summarizing several factors related to readiness, Runkel and Schmuck (1976) state:

> Our evidence indicates that success in OD consultation in facilitating structural change is strongly influenced by the social-psychological readiness of the client organization to change. Readiness is greatest where openness of communication is valued and communication skill is high, where there is a widespread desire for collaborative work, where the administration is supportive or at least not negative toward the intervention, where there is a good agreement at the outset about the educational goals to be reached by restructuring, and where the staff does not have a history of one "innovation" after another that has failed to produce rewarding outcomes. (p. 13)

* Taken together, we can estimate that these studies represent serious OD efforts in over 100 school districts and in well over 300 schools. Schmuck and Runkel summarize 20 different studies, which they and their colleagues conducted. Bassin and Gross worked with over 30 high schools in New York City. Milstein with nine schools in Buffalo. Cohen and Gadon with one small school district. Scheinfeld with two schools in Chicago. Keys with nine schools in a Chicago parochial system. Cooke and Coughlan with seven (and three which received partial treatment) in Northern Illinois. Mohrman et al. with nine in an urban school district. Coad et al. with four and Miles, Fullan and Taylor with 76 school districts (with multiple schools in each district). Seven of the 10 studies consisted of work in single, mostly large, school districts, while three involved multiple school ditricts (Runkel & Schmuck, Cooke & Coughlan, and Miles, Fullan, & Taylor). The districts and schools ranged from rural and suburban to large urban settings.

According to Runkel and Schmuck, a certain amount of organizational readiness is important as a precondition to whether OD will get started and/or be productive: a desire or value toward *open communication* and *collaboration, administrative support, goal clarity* and the absence of *negative history* of innovation.[9] In other places in their writings they emphasize that strong district support from central administrators is necessary, as well as the principal's commitment, support, and involvement at the district level (see also Schmuck et al. 1975).

Two other factors listed as essential are the need to focus on subsystems, and adequate time for participation in the decision by all subsystem members (Runkel & Schmuck, 1976):

> The successes of OD consultation, we believe, are due in large measure to our insistence upon bringing entire subsystems into the consultation. . . . It is of utmost importance to give adequate time for introducing what OD is and how it works to a potential client organization. (p. 13)

In their comparison of successful and unsuccessful experience in six elementary schools (Schmuck et al. 1975), the same point is made more specifically:

> A crucial aspect of these early days, we are convinced, was the way group and individual decisions were made to participate in the project. We believe strongly that the total staff should hold at least three or four meetings over a period of about two months to discuss OD. (p. 356)

Transition, initial operation. Under this category, Runkel and Schmuck include events during the initial use (e.g., the first year) of an OD program, the amount of consultation and time, use of consultants, continuity of leaders, and the sequence and pacing of addressing system problems.

In working in relatively small or medium sized organizations (mostly elementary schools) Runkel and Schmuck have found that approximately 160 hours (about 27 days per staff member, based on Runkel and Schmuck's estimate of 6-hour days) of staff time in direct OD training and work over the period of a year is necessary for major results to occur. In fact, at the other end of the scale they found that "staffs receiving fewer than 24 hours (4 days) of OD help actually declined in their communicative adequacy" (p. 19). They cite some schools that evidenced positive changes after only 46 hours or even fewer, but caution that 24 hours or so is dangerously low because it opens problems, which cannot be resolved in a short time. Thus, a single workshop or two or three workshops totaling 4 days or less fit the latter time frame.

[9] This finding, like that of Milstein's (1978) that more-troubled schools did not choose an offered OD program, is reminiscent of the finding that psychotherapy is most effective with persons of high ego strength, good verbal ability, and so forth. The usual cant is that "the people who need help the most don't take it." But this is too simple a version. Rather, it seems that reasonable resources and capabilities are needed to ensure OD success: really weak, crisis-ridden or totally change-resistant districts simply do not have any extra resources of time, energy, or money to carry out an OD effort.

Recalling our earlier discussion of the definition of OD, Runkel and Bell (1976) comment on the dangers of superficial programs that use only a small number of hours:

In practical terms, this result means that the isolated two day workshops that are only too common as laboratory training for organization development will probably have moderatley destructive results. (p. 132)

Dissertations by Schmuck and Runkel's students provide detailed evidence for this finding. Wyant (1974) showed that time involved in OD can play a major role in its impact. His data indicated that between 1 to 3 days of OD training in communication and problem solving can have deleterious effects on staff collaboration, while more than 3 days or so typically is associated with a facilitating effect. He argued that small amounts of OD training may serve to surface problems, but do not allow for sufficient time to let the staff deal constructively and thoroughly with problems. With more than 3 days allotted, however, the OD training tends to be effective in helping the staff to devise new patterns of interaction that facilitate the open and constructive communication of valid and important information.

Bell (1977) also presented data on the relevance of time expenditure in an OD project. He showed that elementary schools with complex structures—those involving teams, parent advisory committees and the like—benefited more from OD than did elementary schools with simple social structures. His data indicated that for schools with 3 days or less of OD, the relationship between structural complexity and effectiveness of climate was negative, whereas as the amount of time devoted to OD rose above 3 days, the deleterious effect of increased complexity was eliminated.

On the use of consultants—an issue we pursue throughout our review of OD—Runkel and Schmuck (1976) claim:

Consultation in OD is more likely to help a school modify its organizational structure when the staff makes frequent, knowledgeable, and proactive (not passive) use of outside consultants. (p. 19)

They also cite that continuity of the principal is important; in particular, that he or she stay with the organization until at least a year after the outside consultants leave.

The last aspect of the transitional period concerns sequence and pacing. According to Runkel and Schmuck, constant communication, especially rapid feedback of diagnostic information on communication, is necessary as a basic condition for further development (pp. 20–21); and the sequence of change works best if it proceeds *from* communication and problem solving skills *to* structural and curricular changes (Runkel & Schmuck, 1976, p. 21; Schmuck et al, 1975, p. 362) But, see our discussion of Bassin and Gross later for contrary suggestions under different conditions of readiness.

Maintenance, institutionalization. Runkel and Schmuck make only one major observation here: that maintenance of the OD program requires a team or cadre of inside organizational specialists who will operate as a built-in subsystem of OD consultants. In their own work in some school districts they have built the program on the training of OD cadres within the district who operate in a staff relationship to

the needs of the organization (see Runkel & Schmuck, 1976, and especially Schmuck et al., 1977, chap. 12).

The other studies (cited above) of OD programs in school districts provide mostly supportive evidence, but also suggest some additional factors and alternative designs. The Schmuck and Runkel review framework—start-up, transition or initial operation, and maintenance or institutionalization—is useful for analyzing these other studies.

(1) Entry and Start-up

Several of the studies throw new light on the question of organizational readiness. In a general commentary (i.e., not an empirical study), Derr and Demb (1974) essentially take the theoretical position that the conditions in urban school systems make it highly unlikely that OD will even be given a try. Pressing task and crisis issues, financial pressures to use resources for more tangible needs (while OD is an unproven commodity), lack of required interdependence (no need for collaboration, or at least presence of high subsystem autonomy), and general mistrust and skepticism that outside help and in particular OD help will be useful, all mitigate against the likely use of OD. If Derr and Demb are correct, Schmuck and Runkel's conditions for start-up—positive orientation to communication and collaboration, support from administrators, beginning with process skills—do not exist in most city school districts. Conway (Note 7) and Milstein (Note 5) agree with Derr and Demb by suggesting that new approaches to OD are necessary, which can work with educational organizations characterized by "adversarial relations" (i.e., as in contemporary urban educational systems). Alternative approaches (to that of Schmuck and Runkel) in three of our case studies both identify and respond to the conditions in large cities (Scheinfeld 1979, Bassin & Gross, Note 1; Milstein, Note 5, Note 6; Conway, Note 7, Note 8).

Bassin and Gross have established what appears to be a fairly successful OD based renewal program with over 30 high schools in New York City. The entry issues, which they raise, show some similarities to those identified by Schmuck and Runkel, but also some essential differences.

The similarities both in terms of assumptions and evidence are that administrative support, especially by principals, is essential. So are focus on self-help, use of outside and inside consultants, widespread participation, systematic planning, data gathering, and action (Bassin & Gross, p. 6–10).

The main difference at the entry stage (and in subsequent stages) concerns the emphasis on *task and planning* issues and on definite *short-term results*. Bassin and Gross view entry (which is the first step in their 7-step model) as one of convincing, preparing, and negotiating with the principal and key staff members to induce the belief that their involvement will result in task-specific work with some short-term payoff, without major financial costs. Further, these expectations are formalized in specific terms: "The entry stage is completed by the joint development of a written Renewal design or outline" (p. 12).

They refer to their task/short-term orientation as "practicality": an assumption "which deviates from traditional OD practice."

Practicality—In order to succeed in the complex urban school setting Renewal must above all else be practical. People in schools simply have no tolerance for any

approach for improvement which cannot produce tangible, practical results within a short time (6 months) and with a minimal money investment. (p. 10)

Bassin and Gross also cite two other assumptions and orientations varying from those in traditional OD. One is that an outside catalyst (not the OD consultant, but an external to the school district agency) can be important. In their case it was an organization of business people, the Economic Development Council (EDC) of New York City. The other factor concerns the emphasis on *political skills* of the OD consultant and the training process:

In addition to training people within the schools in the process of political skills itself, these consultants must have the ability to help negotiate with occasional opponents of the Renewal process and to help enlist the support of the administration to overcome opposition. Sometimes the Renewal process meets with opposition from the administration itself, in which case the consultant must serve as an effective mediator. Without effective management of political opposition the process is in jeopardy of dying. (p. 11)

Perhaps the other major difference which should be mentioned is that Bassin and Gross represent one of the few cases where students are directly involved in the OD program as trainees (but also see Schmuck, 1974).

The work of Milstein and colleagues in the city of Buffalo raises similar issues, many in the negative sense (i.e., factors which were not or could not be overcome at the entry stages). In May 1977, the Buffalo Public School District was awarded a Federal grant (ESEA Title IV-C) to facilitate the implementation of a court-ordered desegregation program. It involved reassigning children to schools "so that all schools would reflect the approximate racial composition" of the entire district. The grant proposal was to establish and train an OD-based internal district team of change agents (called the School Improvement Resources Team—SIRT), which would facilitate desegregation as well as work on other organizationally specific issues. The history of the start and entry of the project, amply described by Milstein (Note 6, p. 2–11), indicates a number of events or issues that inhibit successful entry.

First, Milstein discusses an issue to which we return throughout our study: the need not only for support or approval from central and building administrators, but for their *active involvement* in the process:

The central office's support of SIRT, at the general level has been constant, but lack of involvement has meant, also, lack of sensitivity to the goals and processes employed. OD is not something that can be "explained," it must be experienced. (p. 5)

Several examples are cited as to the lack of understanding and involvement. Just before the selection of SIRT members the central leaders made a decision to keep all central office personnel on duty throughout the summer, which effectively prevented any central office personnel from being members of SIRT teams. Three weeks before the training was to begin, "central office planners *unilaterally* decided to establish small groups of administrators and teachers in each of nine schools that it felt would

be most affected by the desegregation effort" (p. 10), and assigned these nine groups (called liaison teams) to be trained by SIRT in the summer.

The selection of SIRT members was also an important issue. The procedure used meant that the most "committed" not necessarily the most representative or respected members of district staff were selected (pp. 6–7).

Some of the evils of external grants (which we follow up in the section on maintenance) were evident from the start when the grant was awarded in May, and the summer training session was due to commence in the summer, necessitating a hasty application and selection process for the team (Milstein, p. 5).

In sum, several of the assumptions of effective entry and start-up seem to have been violated in the Buffalo case: lack of specific support and involvement of central and building administrators, excessively rapid start-up, inadequate communication and participation in decisions about the nature of the program, or even whether to do it at all. We would add an assumption of our own: total reliance on external funds. (See also Cohen and Gadon, 1978, p. 63 for further indication that specific and active forms of support by top management must be openly in place, especially in small school systems.)

Scheinfeld's (1979) OD project in two large urban schools confirms many of the findings of the previous case studies and emphasizes the need for different, more issue oriented approaches to OD in urban settings. He suggests that OD, if it is to be successful in urban schools, must simultaneously intervene in three central aspects of school life: the classroom, the organizational climate of the school, and school-community relations (p. 115). The author argues that OD in schools needs to focus on specific developmental goals for children in the classroom which teachers value, if it is to move to organizational climate issues.

The two schools in which Scheinfeld worked also provide interesting support for the nature and importance of particular start-up conditions. In school 1, the area superintendent gave general informal agreement, and teachers agreed to participate in the project, which was wholly developed and funded by the external team. After experiencing considerable difficulty in implementing the project, the external team redesigned their start-up strategy in school 2. In the latter situation, they moved more slowly and explicitly to (a) obtain active, specific (material) support from the district superintendent; (b) involve the principal as an active partner with the external team, teachers, parents, and so forth; (c) carry out a needs assessment by the school and community; (d) have the teachers, principal, and parents write the proposal for funds containing specific goals; (e) establish a short, trial renewable contract with the school; and (f) have a workshop structure, based on teachers' interests and supplemented by follow-up with teachers on a one to one basis in the classroom (Scheinfeld, 1979, p. 117). The OD project was far more successful and in a shorter period of time in school 2 compared with school 1.

Keys' work in different aspects of an urban parochial school system (Keys, [illegible]; Keys & Bartunek, 1979; Keys & Kreisman, 1978) illustrates the complexity of carrying out OD in multiple schools in an urban setting. As usual, the active participation of a central leader (Associate Superintendent of Curriculum) was needed, along with a careful, detailed, informative and participative selection process at each individual school in which staff decided whether they wanted to commit the time and energy to the project. A task force selected (on the criteria of readiness

rather than urgency) nine of the 12 schools who applied to participate in the project (see Keys, 1979, p. 100). Other issues of readiness and subsequent impact of the program on different schools are discussed below.

Cooke and Coughlan (1979) used an elaborate "Survey-Feedback, Problem Solving and Collective Decision-Making Model" to train school leaders and staff to promote faculty participation and on-going problem-solving activities in the school. Twenty-four elementary schools from five nonurban school districts in Northern Illinois participated in a modified experimental design. One group of seven schools received full treatment, a group of three received survey feedback only, and two groups of seven schools served as controls. Selectivity and conditions of support probably shaped the success. For example, seven districts were supposed to participate, but two dropped out due "to financial problems and faculty work overloads" (p. 84). The program had moderate success as we will report below, but the initial conditions of support and entry at the district and building level on the part of principals were major explanatory variables in accounting for success.

Mohrman et al. (1977), using the same SF-PS-CD model, provide even more convincing evidence on problems of support, and on the question of whether process-oriented forms of OD by themselves are appropriate in large urban districts. They identified the entry problems, which they encountered as lukewarm central administrator support, lack of participation by staff in deciding to initiate the program (the decision was made by a central cabinet of administrators and principals), and a prehistory of wasted attempts at innovation. Administrators viewed the teachers as wanting to put in as little time as possible, and teachers viewed administrators as having made decisions to start many new programs involving outside groups: programs which led to very little because the district office attached little importance to them in terms of follow-through. On top of all this, the superintendent left the district before the program was started and "the interim superintendent agreed to cooperate, but without enthusiasm" (Mohrman et al., p. 165). The one slight saving grace was that eventually the decision to participate was made on a school by school basis, with the outside consultants presenting information about the proposed program to the staff (nine of 22 schools in the district decided to participate). In effect, district-wide involvement was impossible under the conditions of entry, with future success depending on the initiative of a few principals and teachers in a context of minimal central office support and understanding. Under these conditions, many of the nine schools participating encountered serious problems during implementation (see section II).

Discussion of entry conditions is conspicuous by its absence in the report of the training program launched by Coad et al. (1976) in four inner-city schools. The training consisted of a 2-week preservice workshop in August for the staff of the four schools (the mornings were spent on OD [goal setting, communications, problem-solving skills, etc.] and the afternoons on curriculum issues) and 4-day-long sessions interspersed through the school year. There is little discussion of entry conditions or approaches other than the reference to the schools being "selected by administrators." The lack of impact, in fact the negative impact (see section III) may be traced to inadequate attention to entry and other operating characteristics reviewed in this section.

Finally, Miles, Fullan, and Taylor (1978a), in their study of 76 U.S. and Canadian

districts where OD had been in place for at least 18 months, found that the conditions which enabled the initiation of OD were most frequently associated with top management support, commitment, and initiative; funding availability; the existence of organizational problems; and the stimulation of inside change agents. They also noted that the problems dealt with most frequently in early phases were those involving organizational task issues and secondarily socioemotional and "output" issues.

Fullan, Miles, and Taylor (1978c) also carried out three case studies, which showed the critical role of central management in initiating and supporting OD programs (for further discussion of these case studies see the following section on initial operation).

In summary, entry conditions and approaches are crucial to the subsequent fate of OD programs. The conditions of OD readiness and whether OD is appropriate for certain types of situations also indicate some guidelines. We leave a summary of these conditions until the end of this section when we have reviewed all of the operating characteristics.

Issues of entry, of course, carry over into the initiation phase and the first year of operation, and several new issues become important.

(2) Transition (Initial operation)

As we have seen, Runkel and Schmuck, in considering initial operation, referred to amount of time, use of consultants, continuity of leaders, and sequence and pacing of problems from initial skills training in communication and problem solving to structural and task changes. These findings and others will be reviewed in the empirical studies that have been discussed in the previous section (Milstein, 1978; Cohen & Gadon, 1978; Scheinfeld, 1979; Keys, 1979; Cooke & Coughlan, 1979; Miles, Fullan, & Taylor, 1978a; Bassin & Gross, Note 1; Coad et al., Note 2).

Bassin and Gross elaborate on the importance of focusing on task issues during the initial phases, with training being built into rather than preceding task work.

> Schmuck and Runkel's model utilizes intensive training of school staff as an initial step . . . Renewal utilizes a planning sequence as the first major intervention in a school, and does training simultaneously as the planning cycle unfolds in the school . . . The reason Renewal began with actual problem-solving work rather than intensive training is the lack of tolerance and time among inner city school personnel for activities that do not generate immediate tangible results. (pp. 3–4)

Bassin and Gross emphasize the importance of working on specific tasks, although it should be stated that their case examples do not indicate that *educational* tasks are a priority. Like Schmuck and Runkel, they indicate that "attention has turned to curriculum issues after the Renewal process has seemed reasonably secure" (p. 81). The task focus at the beginning is likely to be on highly specific organizational problems, which affect the work life of the members of the school: security, relationship to custodial staff, and so forth. On the process/task balance it is worth noting in passing that one of the major initial problems in the massive Louisville OD program was reported to be the emphasis on interpersonal skills and relationships without linking these to specific curriculum and classroom needs (see Doll, Love, & Levine, 1973, p. 526).

Other operating factors identified by Bassin and Gross tend to support Schmuck and Runkel's findings. They indicate that it is important to focus on entire subsystems or systems, and that the school is the unit of change. The conditions for success, according to Bassin and Gross, also depend on the presence and fulfillment of key roles: the principal, an external change agent (called the renewal consultant), an internal change agent (called the renewal coordinator), a core coordinating and decisionmaking group within the school, and the involvement of department heads, teachers, students and parents, and corporate representatives from EDC. We do not have the space to describe all these roles. In brief, it seemed important for the principal to provide specific support (released time, etc.) and oversee communication and assignment of responsibilities. It is noteworthy that in the evaluation of implementation there were more cases of the principal's playing a negative or nonsupportive role than a supportive one:

> Typically, the problem is that the principal is seen as failing to provide sufficient support to ensure the implementation of Renewal projects and plans. (p. 50)

On the other hand, there were some examples in which principals were seen as effective. In these cases, the principal "made time and sought out Renewal people to keep informed," "facilitated and initiated communication of Renewal activities to the faculty," provided time through regular faculty meetings or conference days, "provided a small piece of the schools' budget in the form of teacher time released," and "provided guidance in the development of feasible plans, approved the plans and assured their implementation" (pp. 50–51).

The external consultant provided training and support to the principal and inside change agent and team with a view to having the inside group become independent of the external consultant, that is, the emphasis was on establishing the internal capability of the school leaders and staff. Bassin and Gross also note that no school had an effective program if the internal coordinator was not effective in relating to all the various subgroups in the school and community (see Porterfield and Porterfield (1979) for self descriptions of their work as internal coordinators in the project). The role of the corporate representative was to provide an ongoing relationship to the business community and to help in obtaining additional external resources and funds.

The question of the amount of time necessary for renewal is also explicitly addressed by the authors:

> Renewal is not a one-shot intervention but rather a sustained effort to help a school develop and improve its own problem solving capacity. The first cycle of Renewal (movement through the six stages of the model from entry to evaluation) takes anywhere from six months to a year. It usually takes two to three years to move Renewal beyond two levels within a school. The external Renewal consultant plans to stay with a school on an intensive (once per week basis) for two or three years and then move to a maintenance (as needed) relationship. (Bassin & Gross, p. 26)

Regarding the time for people within the school, Renewal attempts to minimize the time demands. In total, the time investment for the core group seems to be on the order of 60–90 hours per year—most of it on released time, although this varies

according to effort. The rest of the staff is involved at various points during the year using professional development conference time, but the total time involved is unspecified. Most Renewal work is carried out during school time except for some of the work for core group members. Even with the emphasis on minimizing time demands, excessive expenditure of time was the most frequently cited problem by staff in implementing the program.

The nature of financial support for the program is another important feature of the use of OD. In the early years of the project (1974) each of the eight Renewal schools (at the time) received 3.5 positions for teacher released time and $10,000–$20,000 per year for research and development. Funds came from the federal government (NIE) and the New York City Board of Education. Currently, Renewal schools each receive one-fifth to one-half of a position from the Board, and $500 from the EDC. There are two major issues here. One is that there has been a major shift toward minimizing external funds: the financial support from EDC is small. The individual school must support the program with only a small amount of support from the Board and from EDC. The second issue is that the minimal support makes it difficult to involve very many of the staff for any given meeting or event.

This seems to be especially problematic because the program began with substantial external funds, which have now been drastically cut. Bassin and Gross point out:

> Those people who are now about to embark on the Renewal process without external funding are likely to find it easier than those who had the funds, learned to use them productively, and then suffered the loss. (p. 47)

As we turn to Milstein's work, most of the transitional problems follow from the entry and start-up issues identified in the previous section, so we need only refer to them here. By the end of the first week of its summer training the SIRT team had lost five of its 16 members. Although the individual reasons seemed valid, the problem seemed partly due to the rapid start, overload of responsibilities, and in general the ineffective decisionmaking and support relationship between the central office leaders and the SIRT program. Second, the rapidity and confusion of the start-up resulted in overdependence on the outside consultant who found himself doing specific designing for school based activities. "It also appears to have set a pattern of team dependency, requiring that I continue that role" (Milstein, Note 6, p. 15).

Cohen and Gadon (1978), in formulating propositions from their case study, reinforce many of the findings we have been discussing: the importance of the consultant's relating equally to different subgroups; the need for demoralized groups to have early success, if change is to be sustained; feelings of inadequacy and dependence when system members perceive consultants as superior. Cohen and Gadon, as did Bassin and Gross, suggest that exploiting power relationships may be necessary, depending on the conditions existing in the system:

> When there is much mistrust and suspicion among members of a client system, use of existing power relationships in the early days of the project can help to get the project started without permanent negative consequences. (p. 73)

However, they stress that initial power related decisions must be linked to subsequent participation, and to an understanding of the purpose and nature of the

project. On the former, Cohen and Gadon advocate an explicit trial contract where some forms of initial involvement may be required with subsequent free choice after sufficient data have been acquired by participants. Regarding the understanding of the project, Cohen and Gadon indicate that understanding by leadership should be *specific* (not just, as in Milstein's case, going along in general), especially if major organizational change is expected:

> to alter leadership style from authoritarian to participative a manager is likely to need a conceptual model that clarifies the value of changed behavior and the means to achieve it. (p. 75)

There were several operating features of the OD approach employed by Scheinfeld (1979) that accounted for initial success in the second urban school in which they worked: the one-to-one help at the classroom level (i.e., a focus on practical educational issues), as well as work at the organizational climate and school-community levels; the establishment of a clear, short-term renegotiable contract; the use of full-time teacher advisors; on-going, weekly relationships with teachers in the school including workshops and one-to-one contact; an incremental approach to change starting with relatively small successes and gradually moving to more comprehensive efforts; involvement of parents in concrete daily activities (as distinct from general decisionmaking or advisory roles), although the issue of "political" versus "service" roles of parents is quite complicated. Reflecting the "catch 22" character of OD (organizations that have certain OD capacities to begin with are more likely to benefit from further OD), Scheinfeld (p. 121) states that effective OD and teacher development depends on three organizational climate factors: the quality of working relationships among teachers (collaboration, trust, etc.), participation by teachers in decisionmaking, and the relationship between principal and teachers ("no doubt the key relationship in the overall climate of the school" p. 121). In contrasting the two schools in which Scheinfeld's group worked, the different roles of the two principals seemed a major cause of subsequent success or failure. Finally, ongoing active involvement at the district level was important: in one school (the less successful) the district superintendent gave *general* endorsement; in the other school (the more successful) the district superintendent participated actively "in planning and evaluation, contributed the services of district resource personnel, allocated necessary material resources, and provided released time for teachers" (p. 122).

Keys worked on different aspects of OD with several different schools in the school system of the Archdiocese of Chicago. Keys and Bartunek (1979) carried out a goal focus/process skills intervention in seven elementary schools. One of the basic features was the training of 8-member principal-teacher teams from each school who in turn conducted training in their schools. The training involved two in-service workshops, 3 and 2 days in length, with a focus on interpersonal and organizational skills, goal analysis, and conflict utilization. These were followed by brief training sessions in each school conducted by team members. The results of the intervention (which are reported in section III) indicated moderate success including the diffusion of training to new staff members. This study confirms some of our earlier findings: the important role of central administration in supporting the project; the active role of the principal, and the multiplier effect of the training of insiders (by an external consultant) to function as relatively self-sufficient internal trainers of others. The

time commitment seems comparatively small, but may be underreported. More details are given in related studies by Keys (1979) and Keys and Kreisman (1978). The characteristics of a parochial compared to a public system may also have been more conducive to OD once it was endorsed by leaders.[10]

It is not clear whether Keys' (1979) study involved all of the same schools as in the Keys and Bartunek report. The work is based in the same district, and at least some new schools are involved as well as different foci and additional time lines. The study suggests operating conditions for OD essentially in line with our previous observations, and adds material on interschool support mechanisms. For example, in addition to the basic workshops, the use of a league or network or schools was central to the design, and the nine schools were selected based partly on their willingness to participate in the network; an intensive in-service training program was established with a local college of education, in which program and action planning for particular innovations was the focus; and the design was adapted to allow school clusters with mutual interests to work on divergent goals.

Finally, Keys and Kreisman report on their work in three schools. Again it is not clear whether these overlapped with the schools in the previous two studies (they probably did), but much of the focus was different: it related the OD program to impact on classroom climate and grade level. We can briefly comment on the operating characteristics, which included 8 days of OD training, follow-up consultation and in-service courses. The principal and staff in one of the three schools were initially ambivalent about adopting OD premises, achieved less success and eventually withdrew. The other two were successful as we report later.

Cooke and Coughlan (1979) and Mohrman et al. (1977) used the same OD problem-solving model in two different sets of school districts. In addition to reporting the usual finding that school-by-school success varies according to the principal (and recommending active involvement and OD training for principals in the project), the two sets of studies provide interesting contrasts. Cooke and Coughlan report more success in working with small city districts than do Mohrman et al. in working with a large urban district. Conditions for readiness and propensity to make a sustained effort varied considerably in the two projects. The model used does not primarily address practical educational issues per se as do the Bassin and Gross and Scheinfeld approaches in similar large scale urban settings. In other words, schools in large urban situations may not have the time, energy or motivation to participate in process oriented OD, if it does not demonstrate some short-term practical payoff on issues of concern to the staff, while schools in smaller urban districts may be less insistent on immediate payoff.

To elaborate further on the Mohrman et al. experience: since the problems of start-up were severe and unresolved, resistance and skepticism by district administrators and staff affected the various training phases: the training/orientation of principals and of teacher leaders (in the nine schools which had opted to participate) and the relation of principals to teacher leaders and school staff. Data on the implementation of the program (i.e., the degree to which staff members of the schools used the

[10] Keys (1979) discusses some of these conditions: a more homogenous and optimistic value orientation among staff, less turbulence, and presence of debilitating urban problems faced by public schools, etc.

process model, etc.) corroborated the existence of uneven follow-through in using the program. Only four of the eight elementary schools employed the process guidance (the problem solving) model during the first year of implementation. During the second year, the one high school and one of the eight elementary schools dropped out of the program, while only three of the other seven schools actually implemented the program (Mohrman et al., p. 174). In the one school where the program worked best, the authors state that four factors were responsible: (1) the principal let the staff know that he was highly in favor of the program, and reinforced their problem-solving efforts, (2) participation in program meetings was voluntary (and resulted in 100 percent attendance), (3) the school leader took special measures to communicate with and involve all staff, and (4) the school was small (18 teachers) with no great divisiveness (Mohrman et al., p. 180). Looking at all their schools, the authors also add:

> even when teachers were neither divided or predisposed against the program, negative or uncertain attitudes of the principals led the faculties to doubt the legitimacy of the problem-solving groups. (p. 182)

As in the previously reported studies, the respect and objectivity of the internal staff leader (a teacher selected for that role) was important in the successful school—"highly respected" and "not identified with any particular subgroups" (p. 183). Again as before, this shool began with a relatively simple specific problem before proceeding to more complex issues. There was the need for some initial "success" before the slower, more complex process of the complete problem-solving model could be entertained.

The role of finances is once again instructive. The program was supported by NIE with released time and other operating expenses of the program being more or less totally paid for by these external funds. Apparently, school districts will go along with external OD programs that "pay the shot", but under these circumstances may not have the commitment or understanding necessary to implement them.

The initial operating characteristics are not described in any detail by Coad et al. (Note 2). The OD consultants met with each staff, described the program and asked for voluntary participation; 71 percent agreed to participate. Although participation was voluntary, it appears that the presence of the program in the particular four schools was designated by administrators without consultation. The lack of participation by 29 percent of the staff may be connected to the initial entry strategy (or lack of strategy) and is one of the possible reasons the authors cite for program failure. There is no reference to the support or involvement of administrators. The authors also note that the eight external consultants did not operate as a team (they used their own particular approaches rather than implementing the design). The program implementation as it turned out "may well have been a fragmented, less intensive experience for the four faculties than was suggested by the earlier description of the program" (p. 13). We also find out that the four ad hoc day-long follow-up sessions during the year "may not have provided adequate time for any meaningful renewal of commitment, further development of skills or activities relating to the OD emphasis" (p. 13). Thus, the OD effort was not "sustained" during the period of implementation. Rather, the program operated in a series of brief, discontinuous sessions. The lack of any *internal* change agents or consultants (at either the building

or district level) and the lack of coordination at the *district level* point to the absence of other operating factors that are crucial to both the transitional and institutionalization stages. Finally, the costs of the program and source of funding are not explained, but there is an allusion to federal assistance, and the phrase "well financed" is used (p. 14).

Miles, Fullan, and Taylor (1978a) collected extensive data from their sample on operating characteristics. The 76 programs studied used outside consultants (median number, 3, with the most salient one spending about 15 days) over a 3-year period, and *many* more inside consultants (median number, 12, with the most salient one spending 200 days). The insiders were primarily line managers, with little or no formal or informal training in the conduct of OD programs, and little or no linkage to other OD professionals.[11]

As the programs proceeded, task-oriented and output-oriented concerns remained high, while socioemotional issues received less attention.

About half the districts had district level coordinators, an OD steering group, and released time available to support the effort. Specially trained cadres and building-level coordinators were rarer. Training manuals (cf. Schmuck et al., 1977) proved the most crucial sort of materials. The operating dollar costs involved varied widely, but the median amount spent annually was only $5–10,000, a very modest amount. The time costs were more substantial: about 10 days per year for at least a quarter of the total staff. Only about half the programs had a formal evaluation attached to them, and few of these were systematic or thoroughgoing.

The three case studies (Fullan, Miles, & Taylor, 1978c) revealed further details about the specific operation of OD programs in schools: one case was a combined survey feedback and professional-development approach in a large urban district (Winnipeg, Manitoba); the second was an MBO-linked approach in a moderate-sized suburban U.S. district (Adams County, Colorado); and the third was a curriculum-based approach in a small rural district (Garden City, Kansas). Many themes from the 76-district study were reconfirmed in the cases, particularly the roles of top-management support needed for program initiation, the need for structural and educational task emphasis, the importance of strong and sustained inside change agent presence and the low dollar cost and high time costs. But some new themes appeared: (1) the importance of a clear, coherent program vision, accompanied by careful front-end planning; (2) the possibility that OD programs are easier to launch when the external environment is not turbulent; (3) the importance of a close working partnership between a sophisticated inside change agent and the top manager of the district; (4) the idea that the OD program is not an "add-on" but a "way of life" in the district; and (5) the importance of "multiplier" effects achieved by outsiders' steady attention to the training of internal trainers.

(3) Maintenance (or Institutionalization)

We have already foreshadowed the main issues concerning institutionalization of

[11] Miles, Fullan, and Taylor (1978a) also conducted a study of 308 consultants who had carried out OD with schools in the U.S. and Canada, about two-thirds based outside school districts. Strikingly, only about half had received formal training through university or NTL Institute auspices. About one quarter were university-based. The average consultant spent only 15–20 days annually in work with schools.

the OD programs in the school district empirical studies, which we can now briefly state. Bassin and Gross claim that after four years some of the schools are moving toward maintenance:

> The final step of Renewal is institutionalization, the ultimate goal of the Renewal process. Of the twelve schools in the sample for the Assessment, only three have institutionalized the Renewal process. Those three schools had all participated in the program for more than three years. Institutionalization was manifested by an effective recycling of entry and implementation, bolstered by all the other steps of the process. (p. 75)

The other OD projects show similar positive or negative evidence that the quality of the entry and initial operation stages determine the longevity of the OD effort. Within the first 2 years, schools that have participated on weak bases invariably drop out or lose interest (e.g., Mohrman et al., 1977; Coad et al., Note 2); others with stronger starting bases and sustained attempts to train insiders and build in OD as an ongoing part of the district's work take at least two years to implement the programs, and seem to take 4 or 5 years before OD can be considered as reasonably well institutionalized.[12]

Miles, Fullan, and Taylor (1978a) found that 78 percent of their U.S.-Canadian sample of districts expected more or less institutionalized continuation (recall that all had had a minimum of 18 months of sustained work). The most frequent explanations offered were results obtained, commitment and hard work, and top management support. Regression analyses showed that large-scale, heavily funded OD programs were *less* likely to become institutionalized (a finding echoed in Berman and McLaughlin's (1977) study of federally-supported change programs). Other correlates of institutionalization included the presence of strong structural-change emphasis (as contrasted with training of individuals), focus on educational issues, use of training materials and manuals, and minimal reliance on outside change agents. Generally speaking, it appeared in these districts that firm institutionalization of OD programs could be expected to take 4 to 5 years.

Summary

We can sum up our knowledge about the use of OD programs in school districts, based on the studies just reviewed: Effective *entry* is critical and depends on strong specific support from top management. Either a certain level of organizational readiness must exist, or the OD program must be designed/presented in a way which convinces school people that it is task relevant, practical in the short run, and not unduly costly in time or money. On the other hand, Runkel and Schmuck (1974, 1976) provide strong and convincing evidence that a minimum time expenditure (upwards of 4-person days per staff) is important to warn people about. There must be some willingness to invest a certain amount of time and energy. Moreover, OD does cost some money, and programs that are totally dependent on outside money will likely not receive the commitment from the beginning. Some financial investment

[12] There are not many documented examples of institutionalized OD in schools, but some of Runkel and Schmuck's (1976) cases, and Adams County (Fullan, Miles, & Taylor, 1978c) approximate this.

of the district and the schools (and here we are not talking about large sums) would seem to be an accurate indicator of potential success of the program. Decisionmaking about whether to become involved in an OD program is somewhat complicated. It appears that different routes are possible depending on the conditions. Ideally, early participation by all administrators and staff is best. There is some evidence, however, that administrators and teachers could be involved in some prestart OD activities as a precondition to decisions to participate at a later time during the early transition phase. Also, political skill and orientation to working with the power relations in the setting is explicitly advocated by some authors (see also Beer, 1976).

During the *transition or initial use*, active involvement, support, and understanding of the program by top management, and by principals are essential. When this was present (Runkel & Schmuck, several aspects of Keys; Schenfeld, 1979; Bassin & Gross, Note 1) the programs seem to have gotten off to a good start. When it was absent (Milstein, 1978; Mohrman et al, 1977; Coad et al, Note 2) the program experienced problems or went nowhere. Sustained training and work over a period of 2 years also seems necessary for implementing OD programs during the transition phase. The establishment and use of *internal OD* consultants (preferably with liaison or involvement responsibilities at the school level as well as at the level of coordinating the district effort) combined with proactive use of *external* consultants is also important. Programs that do not build this internal capacity, and/or that build up a dependency on one or more external consultants are probably heading for trouble. (Harvey, 1975, p. 4 and Weisbord, 1977, p. 6 also stress the point that the external OD consultant should not be viewed as or operate as a *change agent*. His or her job is to enhance the capabilities of internal managers and other personnel to make effective change decisions within their own organization: a claim which makes a great deal of sense.)

Prospects for longer term *institutionalization* (e.g., after the first 2 years of activity) can be traced to the previous two phases. If active involvement of administrators, use of district funds (as opposed to total reliance on external funds), interaction of OD with educational issues of concern to teachers and administrators, and development of internal consultant capabilities at the coordination and school levels have not been the foci of the entry and transition phases, it is unlikely that the program will survive beyond the first 2 years or so. If it does survive, institutionalization will be achieved when OD becomes a standard part of the district budget, run largely by internal staff who continue to train others, and when it permeates the system as an indistinguishable part of organizational life.

Conclusion

By way of conclusion, it is important to return to the questions of readiness conditions and OD's appropriateness for public service agencies such as schools. We have found enough variety of applications and examples of success to indicate that OD in principle can be useful to school districts, but several qualifying or contingency-based observations should be made. Classical OD (organizational process and problem oriented approaches as in Schmuck & Runkel, Cooke & Coughlan, etc.) seem to depend on fairly stable environmental conditions, and a certain level of favorable attitude and initial propensity for collective problem solving. Thus, this form of OD probably does not represent the most appropriate strategy for change in

turbulent urban school districts. Second, alternative OD designs which place equal (or initially, primary) emphasis on concrete educational issues may be appropriate *if* endorsed by top administrators, and *if* introduced in a way which both demonstrates its payoff, and provides for short-term renewable participation decisions.

B. Overviews and Comparative Reviews of OD

Although there are no comprehensive empirical research reviews of OD in schools (hence our own review), there have been a number of recent good overviews and comparative reviews of OD in general. Our intent is to review in this section the issues concerning the operating characteristics of OD, and to suspend until section III the question of the assessment or impact of OD. The main overview studies relevant to this review are Alderfer (1977), Bowers (1973, 1977), Bowers, Franklin, and Pecorella (1975), Dunn and Swierczek (1977), Franklin (1976), Friedlander and Brown (1974), Margulies, Wright, and Scholl (1977), Morrison (1978), Neilsen and Kimberly (1976), Pasmore and King (1978), Pate, Nielsen, and Bacon (1977), Porras (1979), Porras and Berg (1978), Porras and Patterson (1979).

Friedlander and Brown (1974) in one of the earliest reviews, classify OD broadly as being directed at either the human processual aspects, or the techno-structural aspects of the organization. By and large our review leaves out the OD research on sociotechnical systems per se (job design, job enlargement, job enrichment), because these techniques have not been used in schools as such (although we have included cases where structural and job changes are involved, such as Schmuck et al., 1975). Friedlander and Brown list three different types of human processual approaches to OD: survey feedback, group development (team building), and intergroup development. They cite evidence that survey feedback by itself (without follow-up and internal support)[11] does not seem to lead to change and that collaborative involvement of participants and consultants with a focus on specific action steps are necessary. Team building examples of OD provided little data on the conditions of effective use, and even less on the impact of team building group on the team's relationship to the rest of the organization. Similarly, there were only limited data on the operating charcteristics and impact of intergroup intervention.

Friedlander and Brown (1974) do summarize some of the first examples of comparative research in OD. For example, Bowers' (1973) comparison of the effects of four types of OD (survey feedback, interpersonal process consultation, task process consultation, and laboratory training) and two control types (data handback and no treatment) in 23 organizations is cited. Impact on various organizational aspects was assessed over time (criteria included impact on such aspects as communication, decisionmaking, leadership support, goal emphasis, peer relationship, and satisfaction). The results indicated that survey feedback was associated with the greatest number of changes, interpersonal process consultation was also high on impact, task consultation was neutral, and laboratory training, no treatment, and data handback were associated with a decline on most measures. These findings warrant three comments. First, most of the results are compatible with our earlier observations: for example, laboratory training by itself can lead to negative impact. Second, although survey feedback can lead to positive impact, we know that this depends on a number

[11] This corresponds to what Bowers' (1973) labels "data handback."

of other operating characteristics such as careful problem-solving efforts and supports, defined by Bowers as part of survey feedback. The fact that Bowers' results were positive is possibly associated with the fact that all of the cases of survey feedback were carried out by Bowers and his colleagues (i.e., relatively homogeneous and presumably effective operating characteristics were in practice). Third, the finding on neutral impact of the task approach is contradictory to other data we have presented (e.g., Bassin & Gross, Note 1, who advocate the need for a task focus in schools). We are more inclined to agree with these other data because they are more recent (1978 is different than 1966, when Bowers commenced his project. Currently there is a more urgent concern for task and short-term payoff, at least in schools.); they are based on studies in schools (business organizations and schools may differ), and they are more specific. (We know the operating characteristics of Bassin and Gross's model, but not of Bowers' task approach. Furthermore, the fact that Bowers is an advocate of survey feedback compounds the question of whether the task approach was as homogeneous, or was carried out as thoroughly as the survey feedback approach).[14] In a later review Bowers (1977, p. 59–60) describes three cases of success, and summarizes their common themes: the companies made resources available, the program was integrated with existing roles and structure, the effort was carefully introduced, evaluation was emphasized, consultant style emphasized knowledge transmission and feedback of data on performance, some degree of survey feedback was used; substantial improvements took 2 to 3 years to appear. All of these findings are quite consistent with our earlier review of school district empirical studies.

Pasmore and King (1978) carried out their own longitudinal comparative study of different OD approaches in working with a national food processing company. They designed the intervention in a way that would enable them to make three comparisons: (1) the impact of survey feedback alone, (2) the impact of survey feedback combined with sociotechnical change, and (3) the impact of survey feedback combined with job design. The results of the study are summarized in section III, but we note here that it is one of the few documented studies of longer term OD: it took place over a period of $2\frac{1}{2}$ years.

In classifying the themes and techniques of OD, Alderfer (1977) refers to five different approaches:[15] team building, survey feedback, structural approaches, environmental interfaces (working across organizational boundaries), and cognitive development (focus on the cognitive orientation of the individuals within the

[14] Margulies et al. (1977 p. 438) make a similar critique of the Bowers study: (1) lack of comparability between groups, (2) inadequate diagnostic process prior to the various interventions, (3) unclarity as to whether it was expected that lab training would improve the situation in the total organization, and (4) unclarity as to the "total" situation in each of the comparison groups.

[15] We should note that Alderfer's list, like many others describing OD strategies, mixes up the organizational *foci* of attention (e.g., teams and environmental interface) and the *intervention mode* (e.g., survey feedback, and structural approaches). Schmuck and Miles (1971) have separated these, and added a third dimension (*diagnosed problems*, such as decisionmaking, role definition). The three dimensions can be displayed in an "OD cube" within which any particular OD strategy can be placed.

organization).[16] He claims that OD is no longer concerned just with small group and interpersonal processes, but with a wide range of organizational and environmental issues (Alderfer, 1977, p. 210). Forecasting some of the concerns we raise in section III, Alderfer states that few of the techniques have been evaluated.

Franklin (1976) in a further examination of the data from Bowers' sample, (with two organizations added) represents one of the first examples of more specific analytical comparisons of OD in operation. He compares OD in 11 organizations that had successful OD programs with OD in 14 organizations that had unsuccessful programs. Success and unsuccess were based on changes in 16 survey indices (climate, practices, leadership behavior, satisfaction, etc.). Franklin was able to investigate eight different categories of operating characteristics, most of which are familiar and relevant to our review: (1) characteristics of the environment, (2) characteristics of the organization, (3) initial contact with outside consultant, (4) formal entry procedures, (5) data gathering activities, (6) characteristics of internal change agents, (7) characteristics of external change agents, and (8) exit procedures. Most of the results corroborate our earlier review of empirical studies in schools. The most applicable results, seen in *successful* cases were: the organization had an innovative reputation; there was prior contact with external consultants; specific rather than general problems were expressed; there was a commitment to survey feedback; top managers extended greater support to the effort; introduction of the program as part of a total development effort rather than as an add-on; there was commitment to no more than 4 years of development work on the particular project; internal change agents were carefully selected (but, interestingly the quantity of previous change agent training was *inversely* related to success, with the most successful ones being trained for the first time for the development effort at hand, in skills of diagnosing and prescribing specific interventions). In addition, change agents in the *un*successful organizations were more likely to be members of personnel departments. No differences were found regarding the characteristics of external change agents. Another puzzling finding was that pace, attitude of upper level managers toward project termination, and reasons for termination (on the basis of perceived project failure) did not vary between the successful and unsuccessful cases.

In summarizing, Franklin states that three general areas seem to differentiate success from lack of success: growth or change in the environment, specific interests and commitment by top management, and careful selection of internal change agents who possess assessment-prescriptive skills (see Franklin, 1976, p. 480–490 for additional discussion). These three sets of findings are largely compatible or not inconsistent with our previous results.[17] The findings on termination remain a puzzle, but the particular variables we identified earlier were not directly measured (internal capability versus dependence, source of financing). The finding on the skills of

[16] Tichy's work (1974, 1978a,b), Tichy and Hornstein (1976), and Tichy and Nisberg (1976) on the cognitive orientation of consultants fits this approach.

[17] Most of the empirical studies of OD in schools provided no data on environmental changes. The case studies by Fullan, Miles, and Taylor, (1978a,b,c) suggested that environmental stability was important for success. The organizations in the Franklin sample were all business organizations, where environmental change typically means market shifts. Schools, as we have noted, have a guaranteed market, and environmental changes tend to make for stress and disruption, rather than driving organizational change efforts.

internal change agents as indicated by Franklin is consistent with Bowers, Franklin, and Pecorella's (1975) analysis that intervention should vary depending on whether the main problem concerns information, skill or structural factors.

Margulies, Wright, and Scholl (1977) continue the expansion of more sophisticated analytical comparisons of OD efforts. They reviewed the literature between 1964 and 1976 and classified 30 cases of six types of OD intervention: organizational sensitivity training (e.g., laboratory training), team building, survey feedback, job redesign, sociotechnical, and structural (the latter refers to changes in the management system), which reported systematically collected data on OD research results. At the outset, they remark that despite the hundreds of reports on OD in the literature, only 30 conformed to their criteria (e.g., based on direct research, employed a before/after and control design, etc.)[18] We leave aside a close look at the impact of the six interventions until section III in order to consider first the findings on operating characteristics. First, they do not draw any firm conclusions about laboratory training because variations in operation were not known, and the effects of other simultaneous changes were not known. Their assessment of the most *successful* characteristics of team building programs sounds familiar:

> (1) the need for a thorough diagnostic process to determine the appropriateness of using the team building technique, (2) the need for voluntary and/or participative involvement in the decision to use team building...and (3) the need to establish in-house capability to sustain and support team-building efforts as the need arises. (p. 437)

Regarding survey feedback, Margulies et al. conclude that the six studies they reviewed "cannot answer the question of what conditions survey feedback works best under or who benefits most from the intervention—the management or operatives," but that "survey feedback is a valuable starting point in the diagnostic process" (p. 439).

As to the other three types of OD, there are no new clear findings applicable to our review.

Pate, Nielsen, and Bacon (1977) conducted a similar comparative review of 38 OD research studies (18 of the 30 Margulies et al. studies are included in the Pate et al. review). However, they used different comparison variables. Instead of comparing *types of OD*, they used more analytical categories relating to *types of variables* that characterized the studies. Eight dimensions were compared: length of study time (less than a year, or longer); extent of organizational involvement; nature of intervention (this is the variable used by Margulies et al; though the categories are not totally identical they do show considerable overlap); nature of independent variables; nature of dependent variables; referent measures; statistical analysis; and research design. This study adds no new information other than to reinforce the conclusions that OD involves a variety of interventions, and a variety of independent and dependent variables that are not clearly correlated empirically; that the appropriateness and conditions under which different interventions should be used is not known; and

[18] Only one of the 30 cases involves schools (Schmuck & Runkel's work) reflecting the late development of OD in schools. As we have seen, several more cases in school districts have been carried out and written up since 1976.

that there is limited evaluative information on intervention impact, with most of the existing data based on questionnaire reports.

In an award-winning paper (1976 Douglas McGregor Award), Dunn and Swierczek (1977) carried out one of the more complete reviews of case studies of organizational change efforts. They reiterate the charge that despite a large amount of research literature on organizational change, there is little knowledge about the relationship between theory and practice. They used a grounded theory approach to do a content analysis of 67 case studies drawn from the literature since 1945 on OD, sociotechnical design, participative management, and institution-building. The sample was selected by stratifying cases on three dimensions: (1) type of organization (economic/service/commercial), (2) societal type (modern/modernizing), and (3) outcome (successful/unsuccessful). They ended up with 67 cases that met the criteria and contained adequate empirical data on the independent and dependent variables on which they proposed to test some leading hypotheses in the change literature. The 12 independent variables included such familiar items as type of organization, environment, change agent orientation, and mode of intervention. The two dependent variables were effectiveness (reported impact no matter who reported it, e.g., case writer, clients) and degree of adoption, (i.e., degree of institutionalization). They tested 11 well known hypotheses using cross-tabulations.

The upshot of their research was that only three of the 11 hypotheses received support, while several other prominent ones did not. In brief: results supported the hypotheses that (1) change efforts that are collaborative (between change agent and client) are much more successful than those that are unilateral (change agent determines goals), delegative (delegated sub-group or organization determines goals) or subordinate (client determines goals); (2) participative change agent orientation (involvement of the client in planning, diagnosing, etc) is moderately associated with effectiveness compared to nonparticipative orientations (expert or technical based), and (3) participative change efforts (OD and participative management) are more effective than nonparticipative ones (sociotechnical or socioorganizational design—though in principle, these latter methods do not preclude participation).

Some of the main hypotheses that received little or no support were surprising. For example, change efforts by internal change agents are not more successful than those by externals.[19] Nor was stability of environment, type of organization (economic versus service), or mixed versus single change focus[20] strongly associated with outcomes. The only one of these that is really out of line with our previous findings is mixed versus focussed.[21] We would expect that efforts that simultaneously ad-

[19] Note that this referred to either one change agent *or* the other—collaboration between insider consultants and outsiders was not measured, but may be partially inferred from the three other hypotheses that were supported.

[20] "Single" change focus meant human, technological, structural, *or* task emphasis, while "mixed" included two or more of these.

[21] The change agent hypothesis is not well tested because it fails to measure *combined* insider/outsider forms, and thus does not even consider proactive use of outsiders by insiders; type of organization (economic versus service) is not necessarily a good indicator if "perceived" success is the criterion, and in any case success probably depends more on the various operating characteristics (way in which the program has been introduced and implemented) rather than the type of organization. Finally, a close look at the stability of environment finding shows that

dressed the relationship between different aspects of the organization would be more effective. The evidence was in the direction expected (mixed foci accounted for more successes) but was weak.

Dunn and Swierczek's (1977) research, as the authors themselves state, should be viewed with considerable caution—variables are crudely measured, and the number of cases is small. The study does show promising lines of research, provides support for some of our previous findings, is not strongly incompatible with them, but all in all probably says more about the weaknesses of existing organizational (including OD) theory and research than anything else.

Morrison's (1978) review of 26 OD studies, which included evaluation components, revealed two main problems relevant to our interest in operating characteristics. First, Morrison questions (as we discussed in section I) whether many activities labelled OD are really OD at all. Morrison (p. 64) found that only three of the twenty-six studies met the criteria in French and Bell's (1973) definition of OD. In many cases labeled OD, the change agent demonstrated a greater reliance on the ad hoc use of OD *techniques* than on the *integrated technology* of OD (which she defines as the process of continuous action planning, data collection, feedback, action, evaluation, etc.). Morrison concludes that "the change agent appeared to lack the theory to support his/her efforts" (p. 64). The second familiar problem identified was that few cases were long-range efforts—only three spanned more than 3 years.

In the most recent review, Porras (1979) and Porras and Berg (1978) continue the assault on the inadequacies of OD research by analyzing 35 empirical OD studies in the period 1959 to mid-1975 including many of the ones contained in the three previous reviews. Several important findings on the operating characteristics of OD are noted. First, 60 percent of the OD interventions were less than one year in duration (Porras & Berg, 1978, p. 165) while only 20 percent took place for more than 2 years—a revealing finding in light of the consensus that OD in organization takes more than 2 years to establish. A related finding was that the amount of time (number of days) in "official" OD activities by individual participants was similarly very small (p. 165): 66 percent reported involvement up to 10 days, 9 percent involved 11 to 20 days, 17 percent were "continuous", and 9 percent reported no data. Second, the OD research confirmed the commonly held belief that a disproportionate amount of OD work and data gathering occurs at the management or administrative levels of the organization: 91 percent of the studies report using managers as their data source (49 percent managerial level solely and 42 percent managers along with others; only 9 percent focussed solely on nonmanagerial professionals (p. 160).[22] Third, the OD studies showed a heavy emphasis on working with the individual as the unit of analysis (58 percent) compared to small groups (22 percent) or larger organizational units (19 percent)—a finding that calls into question whether the programs actually meet the criteria of OD reviewed in section I.[23] Fourth, an analysis

effective cases are more likely to occur in long-term stable *and* in short-term unstable situations, more so than under long-term unstable, and short-term stable conditions—a finding that makes sense.

[22] These exceptions came from service organizations (hospitals and schools). Our earlier review indicates that teachers are often the focus of OD in school districts.

[23] See also our comparison of types of OD approaches and their different impacts in our school district sample, Miles, Fullan, and Taylor (1978a).

of the types of intervention used and changes over time is very instructive (p. 162). Regarding the former, 52 percent of the programs were based on laboratory training (two types were used—task and process lab training), 6 percent on counseling, and 5 percent on cognitive training, for a total of 63 percent primarily focused on the *individual* as the unit of change. Less than one third resembled organizationally based OD (15 percent survey feedback, 7 percent structural change, 1 percent intergroup relations, and 8 percent process consultation—the latter being ambiguous as to its focus).

Concerning changes over time, Porras and Berg (1978) compared the pre-1970 studies (N = 15) with the post-1970 ones (N = 20). Among the findings three stand out: First, most cases used more than one intervention technique—two-thirds reported using two or more techniques, and the average number of techniques used has increased from 1.9 prior to 1970 to 2.8 post 1970 (p. 164).

Second, there has been a substantial increase in the use of survey feedback (from 20 percent pre-1970 to 45 percent of the post-1970 cases). Also, task-focused lab training versus process-focused lab training has clearly increased:

> Prior to 1970, 33% of the studies used process training and 27% used task training. Since then process training has dropped to 15% while task training has risen to 50%. (Porras & Berg, 1978, p. 163)

The authors attribute the change to the lack of impact of process training and the relative efficacy of task-focused training.

Third, there has been a shift in working with larger units (small groups and organization (sub)systems) rather than individuals. Before 1970, 73 percent of the studies focused on the individual, while after 1970 48 percent did so. Work with small groups and organizational units increased: approximately equal proportions of the remaining 52 percent focused (after 1970) on small groups (28 percent) and organizational units (24 percent). Thus, the data suggest an encouraging movement in the direction of more authentic OD, but it is fair to say that only a minority of OD projects meet the various criteria we have reviewed in sections I and II.

In a later reanalysis of the same data, Porras (1979) attempted to test 11 hypotheses derived from the OD literature as they relate to the impact of OD. His measure of impact is so weak (the number of statistically significant positive changes as a percentage of the number of changes attempted) given the wide range and small number of cases in most categories, that we place little credence in the findings.[24]

To conclude, the review of comparative reviews confirms that the state of theory and research in OD needs considerably more work. In particular, none of the reviews allowed us to test, in a rigorous specific way, the relationships between the various factors discussed in section I and those identified in section II. There are some quite promising beginning findings, which have appeared in rapid succession in the past two or three years. These results tend to suggest that OD is most effective when it includes (1) support and specific involvement of top and lower level administrators,

[24] The reader may want to examine the study directly. Most of the hypotheses were not confirmed, and in fact most were not directly focused on variables we have been discussing. Those that were tended to gain partial support.

(2) use of internal change agents using external resources in a proactive way, (3) survey feedback, and/or other organizationally focused efforts rather than lab training or isolated small group work, (4) focus on specific problems rather than general ones, and (5) participative and collaborative modes of intervention. We also note that efforts formally labelled "OD" may not meet the criteria of "authentic OD" laid out in our definitional discussion in section I, and that a minority of OD efforts takes place for more than 2 years (a time considered by many to be the minimum necessary for implementation as a stepping stone to institutionalization).[25] There does, however, seem to be a slight trend toward more sophisticated and authentic use of OD (that is, a closer congruence between the components of OD defined in section I and their presence as operating characteristics). Finally, the contribution of the findings in the reviews (based mainly in industrial organizations) to our knowledge of OD in schools is generally supportive or reinforcing, but largely not *specifically* helpful. Few of the cases involved schools, and the detailed variables and their operation in the school-based studies, which we reviewed earlier, were not tested at a specific level, because the variables were more crudely measured than would be necessary for such a test.

III. Outcomes

Most people consider questions about the real impact of OD on organizations and its members to be the most fundamental to its long-term worth for social systems. Depending on one's values and interests, these questions range from effects on human processes in organizations to member attitudes and satisfaction, to organizational performance and productivity. We have touched on some of these issues in section II, but it is important to examine the effects of OD more fully and explicitly. As in the previous sections, we first analyze the empirical studies in school systems and then move to the larger comparative reviews *to draw conclusions* about the state of our knowledge of the results of OD.

A. Empirical Studies in School Districts

Runkel and Schmuck (1976) cite a wide range of effects on OD from the various projects (some 20 studies in all) in which they have been involved:

Our research and the analyses of others indicate that OD methods (properly chosen, sequenced, and applied) can increase a school's spontaneous production of innovative social structures to meet internal and external challenges, improve the relationship between teachers and students, improve the responsiveness and creativity of staff, heighten the influence of the principal without reducing the influence of the staff (and vice-versa), expand the participation of teachers and students in the management

[25] This is a finding based on published research. It may be that many OD *practitioners* are involved in more sustained OD efforts, but are not oriented or do not take the time to write up their results, while academically oriented external consultants are more likely to become engaged in shorter interventions and more likely to publish. Alderfer, 1977, comments on this gap between OD practice and OD research, and our own empirical study of OD in school districts (Miles, Fullan, & Taylor, 1978a) uncovered many instances of "hidden" sustained OD programs, which had never been reported in professional journals.

of the school, and alter attitudes and other morale factors toward more harmonious and supportive expectations. (p. 23)

Among other examples, they refer to one of their main projects, which involved OD training for six elementary schools changing from a traditional structure of self-contained classrooms to differentiated staffing with a multiunit structure (see Schmuck et al., 1975). The results showed that three of the six schools were highly successful in developing and maintaining the organizational relationships and member satisfaction in the new multiunit structure.

Other findings summarized by Runkel and Schmuck include both supportive and unsupportive evidence (some successes and some failures or no-change situations) concerning more effective collaboration among teachers, increased participation in curriculum planning, and in some cases "spill-over" effects on the relations between teachers and students. The latter is of special interest to us. The student effects evidence is somewhat skimpy: such effects were not measured in very many cases, and their measurement sometimes depended on perceptions of teachers. As with adult effects, examples of success and lack of success are both reported.

All in all, Runkel and Schmuck claim that the rate of success (which might be something around 50 percent in their opinion) is noteworthy "considering the large number of failures currently being reported in the literature" (p. 25). The Runkel-Schmuck studies are well conducted, and their sheer number provides confidence in the 50 percent figure.

An external assessment was conducted of Bassin and Gross's (Note 1) High School Renewal Project. Data were collected in a sample of 12 of the 24 schools active in the program in 1976. The evaluator measured both process-oriented and product-type outcomes of the program. Bassin and Gross (p. 41) themselves indicate the major limitations in the evaluation: lack of quantitative summaries across schools, no pre-post evaluations or other quantitative data on student achievement, and data collection only from the minority of persons in each school who were directly involved in the project.

Bassin and Gross present the findings from the external evaluator in qualitative terms. First, the evaluator found that there was a diversity of definitions about what the Renewal Program was, although there was some agreement about some of the main goals (involving students, bringing in outside resources, involving teachers in planning, making communications more open). We take the diversity to mean that a clear, underlying *conception* of the essential values and characteristics of the program (see section I) had not been communicated to participants.[26] Thus people might well identify with one particular goal or another depending on the circumstances. If our earlier conclusion is correct (that there must be a clear relationship between the underlying values and conception of OD and its specific goals and operating characteristics in order to bring about a balanced and consistent OD effort), then the Renewal program is still at the initial stages. This consistency in

[26] The Bassin-Gross model has a very explicit 7-step conception of OD *strategy*, but it does not provide integrating concepts on the functioning of schools as organizations. The fact that the model encourages participants to work on specific programmatic projects rather than general organizational level issues may also account for the goal diversity noted.

bringing about changes of organizational members' conceptions of their work and working relationships is one of the most difficult problems facing OD, and is one of the probable keys to long-term success when OD is used. (see Sarason, 1972 for a particularly illuminating account of the role and importance of conceptions in bringing about organizational change). In assessing the degree of use of the 7-step renewal model, the evaluator found that three of the 12 schools had institutionalized the process—not a bad rate of success, given the brief use in some of the schools, and the extreme odds against establishing such a process in urban high schools in New York.

The project findings were also reported in qualitative terms: improved communication in "many of the schools," dramatic improvement in school security, development of more effective orientation strategies for incoming students, attention to curriculum changes in reading, mathematics, English, and so forth (Bassin & Gross, p. 81).

When commenting on the significance of the changes the authors say:

> Over the thirty schools, the significance of change varies from very substantial to nothing at all. However, both very great and nothing are extremes. In most schools there are changes that do affect hundreds of students. For the most part, the schools remain basically the same, with improvements interspersed throughout. (p. 87)

In short, on the one hand we get a sense of productive development and expansion of the renewal program under the most adverse conditions: severe financial and social constraints. On the other hand, there are no quantitative data reported, even for those individuals in the 12 schools who were directly involved in the program. We have a case of seeming success of OD—even striking success under the circumstances evident in New York City high schools—but firm data are missing. The study does conclude that clearcut success depends on "the right match of variables": strong support from the principals, a strong coordinator, an energetic core group, and no strong divisiveness between teachers and administration (Bassin & Gross, p. 88).

The OD program in Buffalo had completed almost 1 year of operation when Milstein and colleagues made their first report (Milstein, Note 6). This program was also evaluated externally, although the evaluator (Conway, Note 8) had worked with Milstein before on the same project and is in the same department. From the main evaluation we learn that team members of SIRT did improve in some skill areas (e.g., paraphrasing, asking for ideas and information, etc.) and not in others (e.g., risk taking/confronting, etc).

The evaluator also made a subjective estimate on nine dimensions of the organizational health of the group at three points in time (dimensions included goal focus, communication, power equalization, problem solving, etc). The vast majority of these dimensions at all three phases were estimated to be "well satisfied" (Conway, Note 8: Appendix I).

But the conclusions we draw from reading the reports are much more tentative than those reached by Conway and Milstein. We do not have any direct evidence that the new skills were evident in their relationship to external groups. Further, it is also too early to tell whether there will be much of an impact on the schools in the district. Some schools will be following through with the program; time and later evaluative data will be needed. In the meantime, the best we can say is that most

SIRT group members have probably increased some of their own individual and group skills, but we do not know if they have been effective in transferring these skills in their work with school groups.[27]

Cohen and Gadon (1978) report that after two years of OD work, new management changes were "firmly entrenched" (p. 68). Evidence for this statement seems to come from the observation that new committees were operating regularly and dealing with key issues not previously dealt with. Quantitative data are presented on the (administrator-) perceived accomplishment of 12 system goals at two points in time: September of the second year of the contract with April of the second year. These results show gains (of one-half a point or more on a 7-point scale) for three of the 12 goals, (Cohen & Gadon, Table 2, p. 67). So the accomplishments are not large, based on the data presented.

Scheinfeld (1979) describes positive outcomes from the three pronged approach used (community, organization, and one-to-one teacher assistance). In School 1 where the start-up steps were less than facilitative, the staff as a whole never became fully involved, so the strategy shifted to working with 12 (of 30) teachers who showed some interest. Scheinfeld describes a number of class-related changes brought about by these teachers. In School 2, where a more enlightened approach was used (refer to section II) all 21 teachers became involved, many of whom made major changes in their classrooms. However, the data presented are not systematic or detailed. There are also no direct data on organizational climate as an outcome (as distinct from an existing precondition).

The three studies of parochial schools reported by Keys are much more thoroughly documented, and one study shows the relationship of OD to classroom climate. Keys and Bartunek (1979) used a modified experimental design to show that (a) there were no significant differences on goal agreement between experimental and control school staff prior to OD training, while gain scores on actual goal agreement for the experimental schools were significantly greater after the training; (b) there were also significant differences in participation and conflict utilization skills of teachers in experimental compared to control schools; and (c) new teachers who joined OD schools *after the training* also showed greater increases in skills (these newcomers apparently benefited from the normative climate and continued training, which the internal staff team (principal and seven teachers) provided).

Keys (1979) in a follow-up evaluation involving many of the same schools (and some additional ones) describes other outcomes in comparing nine experimental schools with 11 comparison schools: greater skills in planning, decisionmaking and problem solving, norms of greater openness, increased student perception of a positive classroom climate. In a 1-year follow-up, after the externally funded project ended, Keys found continued support for the earlier findings, and evidence that

[27] The causes of effective and ineffective impact, of course, would not only depend on the quality of training, but on the whole host of operating factors that pertain to how the program was introduced and launched (see section II). In another study, Beurgenthal and Milstein (Note 9) claim that OD relevant training can be a factor leading to changes in the attitudes and skills of individuals who have received the training. How this training is used depends on all kinds of other factors that are not included in their study. We agree with Derr (1976) that the distinction between OT (organizational training) and OD is important. Many forms of training which are labeled OD are simply *not* OD as formulated in section I.

experimental schools reported the use of more educational innovations than did control schools, lending support to the hypothesis that improved organizational climate leads to greater innovativeness, a finding to which we shall return. In a further, more anecdotal follow-up 2 or more years later, Keys found that three of the nine schools had withdrawn from the project (which was now internally driven). Two of the three had had ambivalent faculty from the beginning, and a third left due to difficulties with the local pastor. Five of the remaining six schools reported that they continued to use organization development methods for school improvement, and introduction of new curricula. This eventual success rate in five of the nine initial schools approximates Schmuck and Runkel's findings that a 50 percent success rate may be achieved even when there is a high degree of selectivity to begin with, and even when the OD program is reasonably well introduced and administered.

The other study presented by Keys and Kreisman (1978) is of particular interest, because the impact of organizational level OD on classroom climate as perceived by students is independently assessed, comparing three experimental and three matched control schools. They found that students in experimental schools tended to perceive their learning environment as less competitive, more cooperative and more individualistic. They also found interaction effects by grade level (six through eight) noting that all three findings held for grade six, two for grade seven (individualism showed no difference), with negligible differences for eighth graders on *any* of the three factors. Overall, the findings show some support for the claim that OD generated changes at the teacher-teacher level can have an impact on students, but they also raise doubts that such indirect diffusion can be depended on as grade levels increase beyond grade seven—a noteworthy implication that suggests that traditional forms of OD may not be the most appropriate at the high school level.[28]

Cooke and Coughlan (1979) also used a modified experimental design in comparing four types of schools: seven schools that received full treatment in the problem solving model, three schools that received survey feedback only, seven control schools that were pre- and posttested, and seven control schools that were posttested only. Collective structures were implemented in five of the seven schools, and experimental schools showed more effective performance (perceived adequacy of the use of collective processes), and more positive changes in teachers' work attitudes (p. 87).

We have already reported the relevant data (section II) from the other school-based study, which used the SF-PS-CD model (Mohrman et al., 1977). If we take the seven (of nine) schools that proceeded to the second year of the program, we find that the 7-stage process model was in use in three of the seven schools, and feedback sessions were conducted in four of the seven schools. What these data tell us is that the program was *implemented* in three or four schools. They do not indicate the *effects* of this implementation on member satisfaction, or on any kind of organizational performance criteria (save for a few comments regarding one of the elementary schools and one of the subgroups within a high school, p. 176–177). At best we can

[28] In fact, most OD programs involved elementary schools—an interesting observation in its own right. When high schools do participate along with elementary schools they seem more likely to drop out of the project (as in Keys, 1979; Mohrman et al., 1977). Bassin and Gross represent the only major OD program for high schools, and used an alternative OD strategy. Much more research and practice needs to be conducted on whether different forms of OD are effective for elementary and secondary schools.

say that some behavioral changes might have occurred in three or four of the schools (which might not be a bad record given the history of the start-up of the project).

Coad, Miskel, and van Meter (Note 2) measured the impact of their OD program on satisfaction, group process, climate, leadership and even on student achievement, using a control group for comparison. Ironically, on almost every measure the control group scored higher than the trainee group: on *many* measures both groups declined, but the trainee group declined at a greater rate. As we have seen in the previous sections, probable explanations for the failure to produce desired outcomes stem from the absence of necessary entry and operating conditions. It is doubtful whether the program meets our definition of OD (see the earlier discussion of the Coad et al. case), and the negative findings provide support for Runkel and Bell's (1976) finding that a little OD is a dangerous thing.

Miles, Fullan, and Taylor (1978a), in their 76-district study, found that the primary areas of impact lay in the socioemotional domain, followed closely by task-oriented organizational improvement. Changes in output, educational program and structure were also noted. Student effects, often unspecified and based on "soft" data rather than "hard" test data, were mentioned by 70 percent of districts. (Altogether, only one-third of districts mentioned *specific* "soft effects" and another 9 percent, achievement gains.) Most districts reported some negative effects, such as resistance, threat, or increased workload, but these seemed to be nonfatal, more or less routine aspects of the work. Finally, it was very clear that the OD programs were associated with an increased rate of educational change (adoption of instructional innovations) in the district. That is, as Miles (1965) speculated, improved organizational health in schools seems to generate increased innovativeness.

Miles, Fullan, and Taylor also found that experience with OD programs was associated with positive user attitudes about wider use. Only half said they would have done anything differently. Two-thirds of the districts thought that OD should "definitely" be used more widely in their country's schools, and the majority had explained their program to others at workshops and conferences, and through informal contact. About one-third of the districts had visited other districts to explain their work, had sent out reports, or had written articles. Thus program users tended to proselytize.

The study also found that both positive attitude and program impact were strongest in programs with a systematically conceived, structurally oriented emphasis, and weakest where the approach was not coherent, or was focused only on the training of isolated individuals. For example, only 29 percent of the 14 cases that had an individual training focus showed high impact, compared to 66 percent of the 27 cases that were oriented to system level problem solving (Miles, Fullan, and Taylor, 1978a p. 42).

B. Overviews and Comparative Reviews of OD

The consensus of every overview and comparative analysis of the impact of OD is unequivocal in decrying the unavailability of high-quality research and knowledge about the effects of OD programs (see all of the comparative references in section II, pp. 135–159). We will briefly review these sources in order to clarify the main issues.

In 1974, Friedlander and Brown concluded a review of the human processual approaches, by saying that "there is little evidence ... that organizational processes

actually change, or that performance or effectiveness is increased" (p. 335). In one of the latest reviews, Alderfer (1977) indicates that evaluation studies in OD are becoming increasingly more rigorous and sophisticated, although OD research still seems to lag behind OD practice (i.e., there is a great deal of unevaluated, unreported OD practice.)

Even when OD evaluation studies are carried out, there are major problems. Morrison (1979) reviewed 26 OD evaluation studies (i.e., ones that purported to include evaluation) and found that only three met all 12 criteria for validity suggested by Campbell and Stanley (1963).[29] Morrison states that "most of the studies ... did not utilize designs rigorous enough to adequately determine the outcomes of the OD process" (p. 42).

Bowers (1973) as indicated previously, found that survey feedback (contrasted with other forms of OD) had significant impact on 16 indices of organizational climate (communication flow, influence, goal emphasis, support, satisfaction, etc.). Pretest data collected before the intervention were compared with posttest data gathered 1 year after the intervention. Statistically significant posttest gains were found for nearly all survey feedback on 16 dimensions. Methodological limitations with such a design are discussed later, but the evidence of change is more impressive than in most studies, especially given the fact that OD programs in 23 organizations were involved. We should also remember that any success probably depended on the sophisticated and consistent implementation of the "operating characteristics" of the particular survey feedback model developed by Bowers (1973) and his colleagues.[30]

In examining the same data (plus 2 cases), but including all four types of OD treatments (survey feedback, process consultation, task consultation, laboratory training) Franklin (1976) concluded that 11 of the organizations could be characterized as having undergone successful change (based on the 16 dimensions) and 14 classified as unsuccessful. Taking Bowers and Franklin together, the type of treatment is not clearly separated or analyzed in comparison with the operating variables examined by Franklin (i.e., entry, support of top management, etc.--see section II), but we can infer that the successes were not quite as frequent as the unsuccesses (44 versus 56 percent), and that when they did occur they were more likely to be associated with survey feedback approaches.

Pasmore and King (1978) compared the impact of different combinations of OD interventions on employee attitudes and on productivity over a 2½-year OD research project. In working with two units within a company, they found that both human process (survey feedback) interventions and technostructural interventions (sociotechnical redesign and job redesign) had positive impacts on employee attitudes; that combined interventions (survey feedback and either of the two technostructural interventions) had even greater impact on attitudes; but that only the technostructural interventions improved productivity. On the productivity finding, there are two problems related to applicability to schools. First, as the authors indicate, the impact

[29] One of the three most rigorous studies was Cooke and Coughlan's (1979) project. Two other school related studies are reviewed (one falls in the middle and the other in least rigorous categories used by Morrison (1978)—both are case studies of single schools and are not included in our review).

[30] Also see the discussion by Golembiewski and Munzenrider (1976 p. 139) of possible major methodological flaws in Bowers' study.

on productivity may only apply to capital intensive settings (which schools are not). Second, it is impossible in their study to determine whether increases in productivity came solely from changes in *technology* (i.e., regardless of the "socio" part of the change).

Margulies, Wright, and Scholl (1977) focus directly on the question of the "impact on change" of OD techniques. Their general review of the literature led to the conclusion that "although there is an abundance of literature on OD, there is very little research on its effects that can withstand the rigorous testing most social scientists would expect". (p. 428) They found only 30 studies that reported empirical results. In a general sense, the data presented by Margulies et al. (see Table 2, p. 433–434) show that 20 of the cases could be characterized as successful, eight as no change or mixed results, and two as producing negative results (our calculations based on their table). Only one of the 20 cases involves schools, the measures of impact are crude, and one always wonders whether failures are reported in the literature as faithfully as are successes (see Mirvis & Berg, 1977). The authors themselves draw three main conclusions from their analysis. First, there are such inherent difficulties in measuring change that the validity of findings is questionable (e.g., change may be an artifact of the method of measurement—a point which we take up below). Also, most of the OD research projects were of such a short time duration that their true long-term impact could not be traced: "Little effort was spent in studying the long-term effects of the interventions. It is doubtful, from the evidence available, whether any change reported was sustained" (p. 433). Second, where changes were reported, it was questionable whether they could be attributed to the OD intervention, since other events not controlled for could have caused the change; further, most of the interventions were multifaceted, so that it was difficult to determine which variable actually caused the change. Third, the authors question whether the sorts of changes that do occur (e.g., in climate or in organizational processes) actually have an impact on the organization's effectiveness in terms of goal achievement, whether costs justify the changes, and whether impact lasts over time (p. 444).

Margulies et al. (1977) make two types of recommendations. First, that organizations engaged in OD should support and insist on well-planned research and evaluation of the impact of programs; second, that OD practitioners and consultants take greater care to design, conduct, and report research on OD programs. The authors' characterization of the importance of such research conveys the futility of much of the current debate on the worth of OD:

> Until the positive effects and the negative costs of OD interventions are substantiated the outcomes will remain at the level of speculation and theory and will be exaggerated by the proponents of either position. (p. 444)

Pate, Nielsen, and Bacon (1977) also show that "the number of reported attempts to conduct systematic research on the impact of effectiveness of OD has been appallingly slim" (p. 449). For example, all 37 case studies in their sample used some form of attitude or perception questionnaire and 18 of the 37 did not employ any other data collection method (other than questionnaires). Attendant problems included lack of information on reliability or validity, and measurement error associated with questionnaire methods. They recommend the use of multi-methods with

time-series research designs planned prior to the OD intervention. The authors do not provide any data that would enable us to calculate the nature or proportion of successes versus failures.

Dunn and Swierczek's (1977) sample of 67 successful and unsuccessful change efforts shows essentially the same problem: effectiveness could not be determined except "on the basis of the point of view of perceivers—who might be sponsors, external evaluators, or change agents themselves" (p. 141). "Success" was defined as both (1) scoring in the top two categories of a 4-point "effectiveness scale" based on judgements of researchers, sponsors, or users, and (2) including adaptation or institutionalization of changes (not just installation or rejection). Based on this measure, 87 percent of the (18) OD programs were classified as successful, 100 percent of the Participative Management programs were successful (p. 148), while the other three types of change programs: Sociotechnical design, Socioorganizational design, and Institution Building, were lower in success rates, averaging 61 percent (the average rate for the total sample seems to be 75 percent successful/25 percent unsuccessful). Thus, there is a definite trend in favor of OD-type programs, but there are major unanswered questions: What is the exact nature of the OD programs in operation? (we have seen that operating characteristics can vary widely). How reliable and valid is the measure of success (half of which is based on subjective measures often obtained from the sponsor or consultant of the program)?

Porras and Berg (1978) provide further evidence of the problematic quality of OD evaluations, with some indication of improvement over time (post-1970 compared to pre-1970). All 35 studies in their sample collected data through questionnaires (57 percent used only questionnaires) and nonquestionnaire behavioral data were seldom collected or quantified when they were referred to (the main source of nonquestionnaire data was company performance records [pp. 158–159]). On the other hand, a majority of the studies used quasi-experimental designs, and relatively complex statistical methods of analysis (analysis of variance, correlations, regression); both features have increased in use since 1970. The authors applaud the trend, and suggest that further development should include the use of multiple measurement approaches (especially, going beyond questionnaires), longer time frames, and more multivariate data analysis procedures (pp. 170–171). The authors analyzed the studies in terms of their research design and methodological properties. They did not calculate or provide data on the nature of impact or on proportion of successful efforts.

Any faith that one may have in relying solely on questionnaire data should be eliminated through a careful reading of the methodological issues raised by Golembiewski and others (Golembiewski, Billingsley, & Yeager, 1976; Golembiewski & Munzenrider, 1975; see also Kimberly & Nielsen, 1975; Nielsen & Kimberly, 1976; Ross & Deal, Note 10).

Golembiewski and Munzenrider (1975) use Likert's Profile of Organizational Characteristics (which is typical of many instruments measuring organizational climate) to show that variations in "social desirability" sets influence how people respond to questionnaires about their organizations. People high on "social desirability" will respond in terms of what is socially acceptable rather than what exists, thereby confounding the validity of the measure and the meaning of the impact data from before/after research designs.

Even more problematic is Golembiewski et al's (1976) convincing contention that there are at least three types of changes in relation to organizational climate, or any

data based on perceptions. They refer to the three types of changes as alpha, beta, or gamma change. Alpha change refers to a true change in the existential state of the organization comparing two points in time. Beta change involves some existential change, but is complicated by the fact that the respondent's perception of the meaning of the points on the scale (and the distance between interval points) has changed possibly as a result of the OD intervention. For example, initial (preintervention) reports of "the degree of participation in decisions" as high, may show downward trends after the OD intervention, which might have changed the cultural conception of the meaning of participation. To state it another way, a downward change in reported participation may be caused by one of two quite opposite possibilities (Golembiewski et al., 1976, p. 136–137). The downward change may be caused by an objectively real decrease (alpha change); in this case the intervention has *failed*. On the other hand, the same data showing a downward change may result from a more accurate respondent perception of the meaning (of the scale) and of the actual level of participation in the organization. The respondent comes to know more about the meaning and criteria of participation and utilizes a more strict criterion for interpreting the level of participation (the conceptual meaning of the distance between intervals "stretches"). In this case, the intervention may have *succeeded*, in that the respondent has a more realistic description for subsequent action (and indeed the level of actual participation could have increased even though a comparison of pre- and postscores might have shown a decrease). In any case, the apparent decrease in scores is a result of change in the *interpretation of the meaning* of the scale rather than of *actual changes* in the organization.[31] Gamma change, which does not centrally concern us in this review (not because it is unimportant, but because there is no way of assessing it in the studies reviewed), involves a quantum change in redefining the most important variables to the extent that completely new dimensions (outcomes) have occurred, which were not included in the pretest because they were not contemplated or known at the early state (and may remain unknown, if they are not detected). Thus, gamma changes are "off the scale," or more precisely would necessitate entirely different scales.

The distinction between alpha and beta change is extremely important, because seeming successes may actually be failures, and seeming failures or no-change situations may be successes. One potential indicator of the latter may occur when interviews suggest that change has occurred, but questionnaire data show no change.[32] Golembiewski et al. (1976) give one example of this possibility (p. 138). Ross and

[31] This problem is not unique to OD studies, of course (though it may be more severe because OD programs explicitly teach their participants about social processes). Scale meaning shifts doubtless occur in any planned-change or treatment process, however. Most investigators have preferred to avoid the issue and maintain the illusion of standard scales and standard respondents. The problem is especially acute in survey feedback designs: it is typical for respondents to have thoroughly discussed the meaning of particular outcome measures, and to know their means and distributions. Researchers should, of course, "hold back" some measures which could in principle remain uncontaminated by participant discussion and review, but to our knowledge have rarely done so.

[32] Of course, the questionnaire data may be more accurate in any given case, but the point is that we *do not know*, and knowing is essential to making a valid interpretation of program impact.

Deal (Note 10) discuss it at more length after finding such a discrepancy. They complicate the issue even further by offering four alternative interpretations, including the possibility of "beta" change.[33]

Several recommendations of our review authors (cited above) address the limitations of relying solely on questionnaire data. Porras and Berg (1978) advise:

> a strong shift toward the use of interviews, quantified process observations, unobtrusive measures, and phenomenological approaches to supplement (not replace) the questionnaire method of data collection. (pp. 170–171)

Nielsen and Kimberly (1976) suggest five criteria for designing an effective assessment approach: (1) identifying the kinds of information available, and the skills necessary to analyze it; (2) deciding what to assess (defining the precise impacts expected); (3) measuring the consequences, in terms of specific outcomes; (4) using time series data collection (i.e., data collection appropriate to OD); and (5) making explicit the cause/effect assumptions being made. In general, they urge that assessment and feedback should be established as an integral part of all OD designs (i.e., participants and consultants should be involved in the design and use of assessment data).

Several other authors recommend guidelines and models for improving OD evaluation designs and practices (Morrison, 1978; Nicholas, 1979; Porras & Patterson, 1979). Morrison's suggestions include the need for an explicit focus on evaluation built into the contract and the design; encouragement of OD practitioners to write up their results, including both successes and failures, along with intended and unintended consequences; designs geared to the testing of rival hypotheses; independent evaluations; multiple measures and multiple methodologies; and more long-range evaluation efforts. Nicholas offers a framework for evaluation to encourage deliberate evaluation incorporating most of Morrison's guidelines. Porras and Patterson identify barriers to evaluation and provide a corresponding model of assessment, which concentrates on the interrelationships of the assessor, the assessed target, and the assessment process and procedure as all of these relate to the product.

We doubt if an elaborate evaluation model formulated by OD researchers and academics is the most feasible or appropriate approach to evaluation for OD practitioners. But, the assessment of the state of the art of OD evaluation research has certainly demonstrated that more attention is being paid to evaluation over the past few years. Much more is needed.

Summary

We might summarize section III as a whole as follows. First, the probability that

[33] The other possible interpretations concern methodological shortcomings: the process as a garbage can (people participate in cycles and discard the program as soon as the pressure passes); and the process as a myth because of loose-coupling of schools (the myth is maintained that participation has increased or is good, but in reality nothing has changed).

any given OD program, in or out of schools, will be "successful" is perhaps .5 or less. Failures are as likely as successes.[34]

But this conclusion must be qualified in several ways. First, not a few OD programs that have been studied appear to have been ineptly conducted; they focussed on individual training rather than OD, they dealt with superficial issues, they lacked a coherent model, or they did not match interventions to diagnosed problems. Excluding these studies would improve success rates, of course, but the fact is that any domain of professional practice must in part be judged by how well the average or typical practitioner does.

Second, many studies of OD have had methodological weaknesses, including measurement errors and artifacts, over-reliance on questionnaires, lack of adequate controls, and failure to follow the program for a sustained period. Here it is less clear what the effects on success rates are: it is entirely possible that requiring more research stringency would *reduce* the proportions of OD programs found to be successful. So we must be cautious about making large claims for OD, in or out of schools.

We should also note that even where success was claimed (or even reasonably well validated), it appears difficult to make precise explanatory statements of obtained results. This is in part because OD's underlying theory is not particularly crisp, in part because of the inherent complexity of studying organizational intervention, and in part because clear process measures, capable of being linked to outcome, were often absent.

Knowledge about OD cumulates slowly. Any given project takes at least 2 to 3 years;[35] the *N* of any given project is for practical purposes 1; the complexity of organizations and change processes, and the diverse state of present *organization* theory, retards the development of good OD theory. It seems likely that OD *practice* in some respects is more sophisticated and competent than what has been written about it. But this is speculation, not well supported.

The assessment of OD's impact in schools as such suffers from all the problems outlined above. Schools also have an extra problem: their "bottom line" outcomes are supposedly those of improved cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral outcomes in students. But (a) these goals are often diffuse, general, and only measurable with difficulty (see also Milstein, Note 11 for a discussion of the difficulties of school-based measurement); (b) students are often not directly involved in OD programs as participants, but are expected to benefit somehow in a "trickle-down" fashion from human-system or educational programmatic changes introduced among and by the adults of the system. Student benefits certainly need not be the only justification for OD's value in schools—adults in schools have a legitimate claim for a better quality of *their* working lives—but cannot be ignored as a criterion of OD's success in

[34] The conventional widsom on the effects of psychotherapy, a planned-change intervention with a much more focused and limited client system than OD is that about one-third of patients get better. A recent study (Smith & Glass, 1977) concluded after examining 400 studies of psychotherapy that the average client is moved from the 50th to the 75th percentile on outcome measures as a result of therapy.

[35] We speculate that publication pressures have led some academic researchers to move into print more rapidly than this: hence the presence of partial or incomplete cases, and the infrequency of longer-term studies of sustained OD.

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schools. So far, impact of this sort has been less frequently reported than impact on adults. And, as with OD in other settings, the *explanation* of outcomes is weak. We might speculate that coordination problems and "loose coupling" in schools make it even more difficult to link programs to outcomes. Nonetheless, it is possible to gather more direct evaluation information on the operation of OD programs in schools and on reported outcomes, especially if multiple methods of data gathering are used. Such data would extend considerably the moderate confidence that can now be placed in the usefulness of OD for schools.[36]

IV. The Future of OD

We have already summarized the main findings in each of the major subsections. Having completed an assessment of the field, what can we say about the future of OD, especially its future in schools? What are the current and likely future trends in OD? What are the implications for policy?

OD's Future

Some people have concluded that OD in schools has no future, or is in such a weak state that it is bound to die off in the harsh environmental conditions of the foreseeable future. Derr (1976) states that the OD movement in education "has come and gone" like many other administrative fads. Pointing to the limitations on the use of OD in schools (narrowly defined training in group and human relations, limited attention to structural changes) Deal and Derr (Note 12, p. 11) refer to the OD in schools movement as "almost a past-tense phenomenon." Both Lundberg (1976) and Derr (1976) suggest that OD has no future in schools because (a) it has been misapplied; (b) some of the assumptions of OD (interdependence, collaboration, visible indicators of performance, etc.) simply do not apply in schools and thus, there is limited perception of need on the part of administrators and teachers; and (c) current economic and environmental conditions in schools make it unlikely that something as amorphous, long term, unproven, and removed from direct student achievement as OD will be even *tried*, let alone tried with the time, energy, and commitment necessary for it to work.

Various reviews in sections I through III also have suggested that the future of OD, more generally, is dubious due to several powerful factors:

(1) The lack of a real theory of OD (Lundberg, Note 3, etc.)

(2) Unclear goals and the lack of a coherent and comprehensive conception of just what constitutes OD (Kahn, 1974; Weisbrod, 1977, etc.)

(3) Fundamental dilemmas and discrepancies among the values and assumptions of OD, and between espoused values, actual practices, and their consequences (Bowen, 1977; Friedlander, 1976; Friedlander & Brown, 1974).

(4) Superficial and partial uses of OD (Bowers, 1977, etc.)

(5) Using OD without proper diagnosis, entry, start-up procedures, time frames, and other necessary operating characteristics (see all of section II).

(6) Lack of attention to OD research and evaluation and failure to substantiate some claims (see section III).

[36] See also King, Sherwood, and Manning, 1978 for recommendations on how to expand OD's research base.

(7) Limited documented diffusion of OD programs and results. In general, the problem can be characterized as the predominance of diffuse OD practice with limited or unknown rigor and limited exchange of information about the experience of OD.[37]

In our view the problems are not intrinsic ones (although they still could be fatal). That is, there is nothing intrinsic to the values or assumptions of OD which would make it inapplicable to organizations generally, or schools specifically.

The empirical results of the Miles, Fullan, and Taylor study (1978a), plus the earlier studies reviewed (especially those by Schmuck and Runkel) suggest that OD programs, *if they are done right*, have a favorable cost-benefit ratio for schools. But only about 1 percent of North American schools are using OD, and the increase in the diffusion rate is very gradual (although this figure is comparable to Tichy's (1978b p. 85) estimate that only 1 percent of business organizations use OD).

OD is a relatively complex, poorly "packaged," poorly understood, and labor-intensive innovation—and an innovation which, once adopted, is likely to cause substantial changes in the adopting organization. That these changes seem generally positive does not obscure the fact that the "bureaucratic costs" of the innovation (Pincus, 1974) are high. The incentives for adoption are not universally present in school districts. OD appears to increase participation by all levels of personnel, and to improve various aspects of task and socioemotional functioning. But not all districts (or their communities) want to innovate; not all administrators wish for more influence by teachers; and not all districts feel a need for better functioning, even though external observers might claim that any social system can be improved; and many urban districts may be so crisis ridden that they do not have the energy to engage in the time-consuming complex process of OD. OD in its traditional form may not be the most appropriate change strategy in many of these settings.

In any case, the future diffusion of OD in school districts is clouded by the relative scarcity of well-articulated programs and practices that are consistent with OD values. And it is possible that narrow and ineffective applications of OD have created a reputation among school people, which will be impossible to overcome.[38] Such a

[37] It could be pointed out that though these conditions apply to OD in general, the practice of OD shows little sign of declining, and in fact has increased over the past decade. Though this maintenance and expansion is, in part, a function of the creation of an OD-supportive "profession," we might also infer that organizations using OD do find it helpful in many respects, in spite of its scientific and intellectual disorderliness.

We should also note that the great bulk of this criticism comes from "the internal left": that is, from OD consultants themselves. We detect few instances of criticism charging that OD is a "menace," a situation quite different from that involving T-Groups, encounter groups, and the range of treatments created in the "human potential" movement. There has always been plentiful criticism from *both* right and left of what has gone on in intensive group settings. Although OD may not be a "menace," we have noted that it may be a "pacifier," depending on how it is used, and as such, may operate as a conservative force favoring the status quo in organizations (see section I).

[38] While this may be occurring in some regions or instances of use, our general impression is rather that most school personnel have a vague and incomplete impression of what OD is like and what it may do for them. That impression probably arises both from poorly conceptualized and executed programs, and from weak, undeveloped channels of dissemination about OD's processes and effects in schools.

reputation, coupled with more stringent and adverse environmental conditions around schools, and the press for more short-term direct survival, may create a situation in which most school people will no longer turn to OD for help.

Some increasingly sophisticated versions of OD in schools have been developed and used (e.g., Schmuck, Runkel, Arends, & Arends, 1977; Bassin & Gross, Note 1), but the examples of problematic use remain at least equally prevalent (e.g., Mohrman et al., 1977; Milstein, Note 6). A close look at these and other programs shows that models of OD being used are indeed more comprehensive (less narrow) than previous versions, and that problems encountered are as often at the level of entry and operation (section II) as at the level of definition and goals (although the latter remains an important problem).

The comparative empirical reviews of OD also indicate increasing rigor in the nature and use of OD (section II). The problems may still outweigh the progress, but there is a definite trend toward more comprehensive programs (use of multimethods of intervention, going beyond lab training, use of more sophisticated research and evaluation designs). Good and well documented uses of OD probably remain in the minority, but the trend is there.

There is a clear need to distinguish between real OD and partial or mis-labelled OD. Authentic OD, according to our review in section I, consists of planned change programs which are coherent, systematic, long-range, and reflexively oriented. Such OD programs are directed at the improvement of both organizational performance and the quality of life of individuals and groups within the organization. They focus on human processes, technostructural factors, and tasks in the organization using behavioral science concepts and methods, usually with the assistance of internal and external change agents, and with the emphasis on the transfer and development of the capabilities of internal change agents and other organizational members. That is a long list, but we believe that balanced and equal attention to all factors is essential, as is the actual implementation of espoused values. In short, programs should not be called OD unless they possess these characteristics, and if OD in schools is to work well, every effort should be made to develop and implement programs with such characteristics.

Partial forms of OD-related activities (one-shot workshops, training of individuals, etc.) may be valuable, but they should be clearly distinguished from OD itself. Derr (1976, p. 239) states that most of these activities are really OT (organizational training) rather than OD. He indicates that such forms may be useful as demonstration workshops, if they are used as a precondition for deciding whether to proceed to OD. Presumably they may also be helpful in developing new attitudes and skills of *individuals*, but the available data suggest that they have little positive impact on the *organization*. They can have a negative impact on the image of OD, if people think that they *are* OD, and if there is any expectation or promise that they will bring large benefits in organizational functioning.

The *OT* label could be usefully applied more widely to help differentiate various types of programs. In fact, much of the problem hinges on the need for careful elaboration of the meaning of the *O* and the *D* of OD. Programs that do not focus on a significant proportion of the organization qua organization (as distinct from focusing on individuals or isolated subgroups) are probably not OD. Approaches that involve training without linking it to the development of structures and processes

designed to improve organizational functioning and the quality of life of its members are also not OD in the sense intended by most theorists and practitioners when they define OD.

Locating the presence or absence of the various definitional, entry and operating characteristics of OD described in this review, and identifying whether or not these features are implemented in a way in which *practice* is congruent with *espoused values* or intentions, could contribute significantly to an understanding of why OD works in some situations, but not in others. OD involves the use of particular technologies and techniques, but these are not its main distinguishing features. In the first place, "it is largely a *value* decision" whether or not to get into OD (Weisbord, 1978b, p. 5). In the second place, OD requires the development of "a conception or way of thinking" about the organization and the individuals in it: that is, the use of self-monitoring and conceptually guided activities vis-a-vis the components of OD defined in this review.

Part of the problem as uncovered in this review is that OD as a relatively recent and evolving phenomenon is still in a state of flux. Partial, ad hoc uses, alternative designs, lack of documentation and dissemination (especially of the work of OD practitioners), changing urban conditions in schools, and so forth, add up to problems of ambiguity and ambivalence about the field by both insiders and outsiders. Porter (1978) claims that "practice is all over the map." Tichy (1978a,b) in a longitudinal comparison (1971 versus 1976) of four types of change agents (outside pressure type, OD type, people-change, and analysis-for-the-top types), found that OD change agents evidenced the greatest flux, diversity of goals and frequency of change. Critiques of OD reviewed in this paper point to similar lack of coherence in OD practices, but point to some clear implications.

One of the basic messages in this review is that the *values, and the conceptual bases which underly OD are far more important than its technology and techniques.* The use of OD technology without a clear underlying conception, which controls this use, is probably harmful to the reputation of OD, or to the people exposed to these versions, or to both. The future of OD will require contending with both misrepresentation (labelling something OD when it is not) and misuse (applying the technology without its value and conceptual base as the primary guiding features).[9]

This discussion is also relevant to the issue of institutionalization of OD programs. Jones and Pfeiffer (1978) claim that to institutionalize an OD unit is to create a vested interest group in the organization which competes for scarce resources, and loses its ability to be helpful. Our review helps to illuminate the meaning of institutionalization. It does not necessarily mean the establishment of a separate unit. More generally, we take institutionalization to mean the establishment in the organization of a way of doing things consistent with OD principles and operating characteristics: for example, building the capacity of internal managers and other members to the point where OD becomes a "way of life" in the organization. This can be achieved either through the establishment of an OD unit, or through building

[9] Many of these points are supported by Jones and Pfeiffer (1978), Pfeiffer and Jones (1976), and Harvey (1975); the latter author claims that once OD becomes "a capitalized noun" it becomes reified and impotent. We do not agree that this is inevitable, but clearly the existence of superficial use is evident. A reading of section I helps to clarify the more basic meaning of OD (e.g., Weisbord, 1977).

it in as part of the line function of organizational members.[40] Again, the implementation of the values and conceptions of OD (as defined in this review) are the primary criteria of institutionalization.

When we turn more specifically to the use of OD in schools we have a growing sense of a specific number of crucial entry and other operational factors that are essential to the success of OD in school districts (see especially, section II, empirical studies and policy advice to local schools). It also seems that more attention will have to be paid to clarifying and measuring the possible benefits of OD. Whatever the range of OD impacts may be, OD would be better served if outcomes were more clearly stated and substantiated and included a focus on students and parents as well as on teachers and administrators.[41]

The larger question of whether OD is more effective than other change strategies in dealing with organizational problems is impossible to answer at present. This is true partly because there are many paths to organizational improvement including (a) firing ineffective personnel; (b) hiring more effective personnel; (c) training individual personnel for increased effectiveness; (d) reorganization or redesign; (e) introduction of new technology; (f) designing a new organization from the start. None of these necessarily involves the increased reflexiveness we have seen as central to OD. We have yet to see any systematic review comparing reflexive, self-analytic, OD-like approaches to the more traditional change strategies noted, either in schools or other organizations.

Most reflexively oriented change strategies have a common core of features (they require data, they involve many of the organization's participants, they minimize expert prescription, etc.). It is probably desirable, as OD goes forward, that a range of different approaches be utilized. Labeling something "OD" or "not OD" as we have implied is probably less crucial for knowledge development than being aware of the core factors in OD, which we have outlined, and taking these into account in both practice and research. Still, things do have names, and our preference is still that a change effort should be called "OD" when it is reflexive, sustained, coherent, organization-focused, catalyst-aided, science-using, and oriented to both system and individual improvement—and called something else, like "OT," or "curriculum change," or "innovation adoption," or "performance improvement" when it is not. Sharpening the meaning and practice of OD seems preferable to dropping the label (as suggested by Harvey, 1975, and Derr, 1976a), and to adopting even more diffuse labels such as organization consultation or "change." In any case, a more accurate and fully developed description of the values and theoretical and practical features of "authentic" OD is perhaps one of the main outcomes of our review of literature.

[40] The Adams County case study (Fullan, Miles, & Taylor, 1978c) illustrates how OD can become integrated in the organization.

[41] As with other educational innovations, school districts do not necessarily make decisions to adopt or continue a program based on evaluation data, but such data can distinguish between implemented and nonimplemented programs and their outcomes, and in the long run can help prove whether or not OD is another unfounded educational innovation. Good evaluation data can also contribute to better (less superficial) forms of diffusion.

Policy Implications

We believe that reviews of this sort should not simply conclude with a plea for more research, as desirable as that may be. There are some clear policy implications for local school districts and units existing beyond them. Generally speaking, we are *moderately* confident that (1) well-conceptualized and executed OD programs can be cost-effective means for school improvement for many school districts; (2) that further diffusion of OD in North American schools will require stimulative effort from units beyond local school districts. Our advice to local schools and other units is as follows.

Local school districts. OD seems beneficial to districts regardless of their size, wealth, location, or socioeconomic character (but note the question of readiness criteria and the need for adaptation in urban settings). Districts that define their needs in task-oriented, educationally focused terms and consider structural changes a possibility are more likely to be successful, particularly if the superintendent supplies strong initial support.

OD programs have a favorable cost-benefit ratio: in many situations they can reasonably be expected to improve organizational climate and functioning, increase instructional innovations, and improve student outcomes. Dollar costs are often less than one-half of 1 percent of total budget, easily comparable to inservice education costs; personnel time investment is larger (10–20 days a year per person), and programs require about 5 years for firm institutionalization. Program effects such as resistance, defensiveness, and insecurity are natural but do not seem to jeopardize program success (for documentation of these assertions, see Miles, Fullan, & Taylor, 1978a).

More effective OD programs are systematic, with a well-developed framework, aimed at structural change rather than just personnel training. They are steadily supported by top management, must be carefully planned at initiation, and have a district-level coordinator probably spending at least one-third time. Competent outside consultants (perhaps 20 days a year) can aid with early planning and program development, and with developing well-trained inside consultants (both administrators and teachers)—an essential component for OD effectiveness and continued use. The internal consultant's work in extending the OD program to all parts of the system will be facilitated if systematic reusable program components of packages are developed and locally adapted. A full-time OD specialist, working closely with the superintendent, is probably desirable in districts of 1,000 or more staff (Miles, Fullan, & Taylor, 1978a).

Intermediate units. For agencies providing regional assistance to local districts, useful OD services would include supplying consultation, and developing training (and network development) for competent OD consultants, so that a better "infrastructure" emerges. They could also sponsor awareness conferences for local administrators, and aid adoption and implementation of validated OD approaches using methods like those employed by the National Diffusion Network in the United States. Modest matching-grant support might also be provided to local districts for (a) program initiation and planning; and (b) locally mounted "lateral" dissemination efforts, in which districts prepare materials, hold workshops for other districts, report their work, and send consultants to other districts.

Universities. Much early OD work in schools was university initiated, and up to a

quarter of all educational consultants are university based. Universities could usefully develop training programs for external and internal OD consultants, stimulate awareness/interest in their area through conferences, and carry out experimental projects in collaboration with local districts, especially with accompanying research. To work, such programs should be field based, working collaboratively with school districts.

State/provincial departments of education. For those departments with a clear interest in supplying support and facilitation to local districts (as contrasted with the historic regulatory role), OD has promise as a method of district capability enhancement. OD should not be mandated, but departments should work for enabling legislation, which would permit the use of state funds for local system improvement. A small grants program for experimental projects would also be useful. OD also should be used with state/provincial departments of education *themselves*, both to improve their functioning, and to provide "knowledge of acquaintance" with OD for department personnel.

Federal education agencies. Federal agencies can most usefully aid the responsible progress of OD in schools at this point by supporting research and development work and/or by providing matching funds to school districts. We have noted that large external grants by themselves may do more harm than good by encouraging hasty, ill-planned efforts, and are certainly not associated with successful institutionalization. Specifically, we suggest support of (a) improvement of OD-supportive *materials* through contracts for review of existing materials and the development of new materials; (b) development of prototype *training* programs for OD consultants, particularly those working within local districts; (c) operation and documentation of OD *practitioner network* development, so that OD change agents have supportive colleagueship for their efforts; (d) improved *conceptualization* through reviews and analysis; (e) better *evaluation* of OD efforts, both through review of existing studies, and funding local district evaluation efforts; (f) more extensive *dissemination* efforts, including the production of case studies, awareness conferences, a clearing house, and lateral dissemination by districts; (g) *research* on a wide range of questions on OD adoption, implementation, and outcome; (h) experimental *diffusion* projects using a model like that developed in the National Diffusion Network; (i) direct *operational* grants for OD to local districts (though this may not be advisable for several years, until the knowledge and practice base and the number of users has expanded considerably).

Primary priority should be given to development of support materials and improved OD practitioner competency, along with some dissemination effort. If there is a larger, responsible base of coherent OD practice in schools, more intelligent and illuminating research can be carried out. Some research topics which seem potentially most valuable are:

(a) Case studies of OD programs and their coping strategies over time.
(b) Survey of a national probability sample of superintendents assessing their awareness of interest in and use of OD.
(c) Study of OD discontinuance, and its causes.
(d) Analysis of role demands on inside consultants, and derivation of training implications.
(e) Study of insider/outsider collaboration strategies in more successful programs.

(f) Examination of state-mandated accountability schemes, to assess their similarities and differences to OD (as in our revised definition) and their consequences more broadly.
(g) Study of OD programs that emphasize student outcomes, and with concentration on improvements in classroom educational practice.
(h) Empirical analysis of what is meant by "administrator support" for OD programs: critical mechanisms, behavior, decisions, and so forth.
(i) Detailed study of the antecedents of successful institutionalization; depiction of thoroughly-institutionalized OD programs.
(j) Support of studies of *alternative models or forms* of OD and the testing of them according to their appropriateness for different conditions (e.g., elementary/secondary focus, stable/unstable environment, crisis/non-crisis situations, etc.).

Clear information on such topics would undoubtedly increase the confidence with which OD could be recommended as a school improvement strategy, and the skill with which it is carried out. Both outcomes are in our view desirable.

Conclusion

Given our existing state of knowledge, we conclude that OD is a useful strategy for school improvement. The best general guidelines for use seem to be threefold: (1) use OD in school districts that meet (or can come to meet) certain readiness criteria, and introduce OD in these settings following guidelines suggested in this review;[42] (2) develop and adapt new models of OD, which are more appropriate to changing contemporary conditions and to divergent settings (see Scheinfeld, 1979; Tichy, 1978b; Bassin and Gross, Note 1), and (3) use other strategies (planned curriculum change, new hiring, new policies and legislation, political lobbying) for organizational change where (1) or (2) cannot be achieved (although components of OD, especially its underlying principles, such as reflexivity, valid data, participatory problem-solving processes can be incorporated into any change strategy).

Whether the future of OD in education will result in its 'demise, absorption, or renewal' (Tichy, 1978b), there is little doubt in our minds about its significance as a change strategy—a strategy which will, *if* its own reflexive, self-evaluative character is maintained, become increasingly well-adapted to the task of improving schools.

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